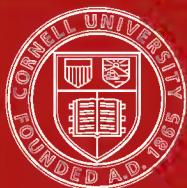


Vivian of Virginia



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“A young maiden appeared coming down the winding lane.” — Page 42.

Vivian of Virginia

Being

The Memoirs of Our First Rebellion,
by John Vivian, Esq., of Middle
Plantation, Virginia

By

HULBERT FULLER

Illustrated by

FRANK T. MERRILL



Lamson, Wolffe and Company
Boston, New York, and London

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Vivian of Virginia

Chapter I

As Blows the Wind

I HAD returned to England from following the wars with sundry and dire forebodings of the future ; and for six weeks I had been dallying in London, hopefully waiting to hear news of some fresh engagement that would at last turn the tide of my ill fortunes that ensued on the recall of the English troops from Flanders ; where, under the ascendant star of Churchill, our forces had repeatedly distinguished themselves fighting with Turenne against the Dutch. Having been long inured to such stirring scenes, these days of indolent life in London in the spring of 1676 had become well-nigh unbearable, so that I was ready for any honourable adventure that might serve as a fulcrum to the hopeful leverage of better fortunes.

I had been expecting, and not without just cause, some further assistance from Colonel Churchill ; having been one of a dozen men in

his party when Turenne won his now well-known wager, at the time we attacked and regained a position previously lost by twice that number of his own men. But Churchill at present had no mind for anything save his love-affair with Mistress Sarah Jennings, of whom it was rumoured that she was an exceeding coy maiden, so that, despite the colonel's well-known ardour, the works he had carried impetuously on one day he was fain to surrender and give away again on the next.

I had on various occasions tried to get speech with him, knowing that underneath his somewhat cold and haughty exterior there beat the warm heart of a youthful soldier who never forgot a service rendered. So far, however, all my efforts to see him had been in vain.

Sitting there in my lodgings that spring day, near the church of St. Mary Le-Bow in Cheapside, the events of my life passed before me in review as in a dream. I was alone in the world, and never, it seemed to me, had I felt my loneliness more keenly than at this moment. My father had been, in his day, one of Cromwell's Ironsides; fighting zealously through the wars against the first Charles, and having, as I well remember, a souvenir of his death in the shape of a lace handkerchief dipped in the king's blood at the time of his execution. All through the following years my father remained a stanch Puritan and an aggressive Roundhead.

And it was this very severity of my early training, perhaps, that first turned my boyish sympathies towards the second Charles, then a wanderer on the Continent. There being at that day a trite saying that, if a parent wished to make an ardent Royalist of his son, he should bring him up as a Roundhead. So prone are we to revolt from surroundings into which we are born.

Such being the bent of my sympathies, eager to slip the collar on an instant's warning, my enthusiasm knew no bounds when the king at last returned to his own. At that time I was a lad of fourteen, and I still recall with a smile that curious species of pleasure and dismay which my father manifested on first hearing of the king's successful contrivance with General Monk. As a Puritan he remained set and stern, believing that naught save disaster could result from this overthrowing of all the principles for which he had once fought; whilst as a merchant — and that, too, by virtue of one of those vague and but ill-understood orderings of Providence whereby he, a Roundhead, had been impelled to follow the calling of a haberdasher and trader in trifles — he must perforce smile and clap his hands; for in sooth it meant, as subsequent events proved, a handsome trade in ribands, gewgaws, and French finery out of which my parent made a goodly profit.

Perceiving my advantage, therefore, and be-

ing ably seconded by my mother withal, I made bold to ask him for permission to run with the other lads of my acquaintance out to Blackheath, there to witness the king's triumphal entry. But at my request he instantly frowned, so that my mother must needs interpose, "Nay, father, we have had our day; let the lad have his and be merry." And straightway she bedecked me after a manner befitting the occasion, then bade me quickly begone.

Whereof there is scant to add; the events of that day being still too fresh in the minds of all for me to presume to revive them through childish memory. Suffice it, therefore, that on this day, falling in with a party of gayly clad soldiery, we followed out to where the army of the Commonwealth, numbering some thirty thousand martial saints formerly under Cromwell, was drawn up to receive the king. At last, methought, the day of arbitrary suppression of popular merriment was over; so that when his Majesty passed we burst out into a wild, spontaneous shout that followed after him all the way into London. A morris dance following, I discovered Robin Hood and Maid Marian, the hobby horse and the dragon, for the first time; the dancers all being dressed in gay costumes, sparkling with tinsel, and adorned with bells and ribands. Whilst hour after hour the procession continued to pass down streets festooned with costly garlands made up of scarfs

and ribands decorated with spoons and bodkins of silver, small plate of various kinds, and some with gold chains. At Deptford the procession was met by a company of young maidens numbering nigh one hundred, dressed all alike in white robes and scarfs, and strewing garlands and nosegays in the path of the king. And so on into London, where the popular joy was even wilder and less restrained than in the country.

On nearing Whitehall, the king's party was still further swelled by the presence of certain eminent citizens of the town, dressed brilliantly in black velvet coats, with gold chains about their necks, all handsomely mounted, and with their footmen dressed in suit, cassock, and ribands to match. Bands of music played everywhere, the houses were hung with tapestry, carpets, and costly stuffs, while the fountains and conduits ran with claret as the king passed. At Charing Cross, within the rails, was a stand of six hundred pikes, being composed — by that strange turn of events — of the same gentlemen and knights who had been officers in the first Charles's army. But I had followed the procession from an early hour in the afternoon, and now as I turned to go home, late in the evening, tired and weary, but still rejoicing with the excitement and fatigue of the long march, I remember a distant clock striking nine just as the roaring of guns announced the arrival of the king in his palace at Whitehall.

On quitting school some three years following this event, and having little inclination toward the business followed by my father, I was apprenticed to Master Pillsbury, apothecary and physician, with the laudable ambition to follow in his career of bone-setting and healing of the sick, by the administering of drugs and the mastery of certain occult processes with which he was well acquaint ; he having certain pills of his own devisement whereby he could insure his patients well-nigh everything, save immortality. Nevertheless, after two years' service of this kind, it dawned on me that I was as ill fit to follow this calling as any I could have made choice of. Puissant and lusty knave that I was, with scarce any consciousness of the wisdom of pains and aches in others, I felt that it ill became my six feet of developing manhood to be playing the nurse in the sick-room ; so that my ardour in following the instructions of my preceptor and the perusal of his tablets soon became only lukewarm at best.

That I was somewhat stupid in evolving the plain meaning of these latter I am now free to confess, though at that time, I remember, I could make scarce any headway in their arrangement of logical sequences. As when on one occasion Master Pillsbury saw cause to administer a drachm of hemlock dropwort to a carpenter in a fever, so effecting his recovery ; yet at another time, when a smith called him to

attend on a similar fever, he administered to him also a drachm of hemlock dropwort and the smith died. Wherefore beneath his brief citation of these events Master Pillsbury had written boldly in red ink: "Warning! A Dose that will Cure a Carpenter will Kill a Smith."

It was about this time, while I was wavering in the choice of a career, that the plague swept over England, causing thought of aught else to be blotted out whilst I followed Master Pillsbury about from house to house, or was sent by him to visit such as he was unable to attend himself. And fearful days they were, compared to which the horrors of war — and I have seen my share — pale into insignificance. Eventually I was stricken like the rest, and I shall ever remember, so long as I continue to live, of lying in old St. Paul's, which had been turned into a pest-house, and seeing the bodies lying there on every side so closely that one could touch his neighbour by turning his hand; the dead-wagons coming and going, heaping up the dead into great piles to be carted off and buried in trenches. Watching the scene round me, the wonder and the horror of it all made it seem to me like a diabolical dream of some other world, until the terrible pains came and carried me off into unconsciousness. So that when told afterwards of the death of my parents and all my nearest of kin, I was still so benumbed

by the sights I had witnessed as to be scarce conscious of the bitter misery and lonely heart-ache which the news implied. Heaven spared me this at the time, but I was to learn it later in all its force.

Left to shift for myself thus early in life, and being of a strong frame and rugged constitution, I naturally became a follower of the army; rising slowly out of the lower ranks, by reason, chiefly, of a strong arm and a hard-won name for bravery in action, to the honourable rank of sergeant. True, there had been others of my station reckless alike of honour and country, who had far outstripped me in the acquisition of rank, and the winning of wealth besides; but, thinking of them now, I could not recall to mind any that had managed either to keep their dishonourable gains or to escape the contempt of their comrades. In the midst of my poverty and humble surroundings, of which I could not help but feel ashamed, I remembered — and I think of it to this day with the same satisfaction — that my name, thank God, was unsullied.

Resolving still to find some way to see my old commander, and quitting my lodgings just as dusk was falling, I turned down Cheapside, intending to go towards Whitehall. I had proceeded but a short distance, however, when my attention was attracted by a party of three standing in front of the Nag's Head; two of whom

I recognized at once, with their flopping hats pinned up on one side, sandy weather-beaten perukes, dirty linen, and long iron swords jarring at their heels — a couple of rufflers, camp-followers kicked out of the army, dwellers in Alsatia, whom I knew to be ready for any crime sufficiently profitable and lacking of courage.

Seeing my approach, they suddenly ceased their talk and turned quickly into the tavern, but in such a manner as could not fail to arouse my suspicions; so that I followed anon and seated myself at a table directly opposite to them, where I could easily overhear their conversation without exciting their notice. In this object my purpose was aided by the character of the crowd present, where tradesmen and cavaliers, courtiers and apprentices, rubbed elbows good-naturedly, sitting at long tables drinking, playing cards, and shaking dice.

The third member composing the party of three in which I was interested, I could now observe at pleasure. He was dressed richly but plainly in black velvet, with a high-crowned hat, ornamented by two plumes, cocked jauntily on the back of his head. I came to the conclusion, therefore, that he was a tradesman, in well-to-do circumstances, and who, being out for a lark, had fallen in with the rascals now with him. In this opinion I was confirmed by such scraps of conversation as I could now and then catch above the din of the room; discov-

ering, in substance, that they had been to the cock-fight at the pit by the King's Gate, some money having been passed between them on wagers that they were still discussing with but scant signs of agreement.

Hence it was greatly to my astoundment when, after drinking freely for the space, I should think, of less than an hour, they arose with many protestations of good-fellowship, and passed out of the tavern arm in arm. They had been gone but a few seconds, however, ere I was up and after them; and, catching sight of them as they passed under a lamp some twenty doors ahead, I followed on past St. Paul's down Ludgate Hill into Fleet Street, and was but a few paces behind when they turned down Whitefriars Street into Alsatia. As I turned the corner, a muffled cry of "Help! thieves!" caused me to quicken my pace into a run as I drew my rapier.

On passing the corner of an alley, a door was suddenly thrown open, flooding the dark passage with a dim light. At the same moment two men came out of the room, and peering cautiously up and down the alley, stooped and picked up a dark form lying at their feet, and were returning through the door when my footsteps surprised them. Recognizing my friends of the Nag's Head, I sprang for the door just in time to prevent, by a few inches, its being closed and barred.

I could hear their muttered curses of surprise and anger as I stood there leaning firmly against the door while recovering my breath. Until, finding that with all their efforts they could not dislodge me by force of weight, one of them thrust his ugly face in the narrow space left open, and began to parley.

"What do you want here?" he demanded with an assurance I knew to be assumed.

I did not answer, but stood there firmly, watching him closely the while lest he should take advantage of me unawares.

"Come, now!" he growled. "You beggarly soldier out of a job. We know you! Will you be off about your business, or wait to be spitted and thrown into the Fleet?"

Still I did not answer, fearing to arouse the neighbourhood; though I could see that my continued silence was like a wave of the scarlet sash in the face of a mad bull, and that he was rapidly working himself into a pretty passion in which he would shortly do something reckless.

It came almost as the thought struck me. Maddened by my pertinacy, and not daring to leave the door with his companion alone to guard it, and being unable to get at their prey till first getting rid of me, the knave suddenly made a pass at me with his sword through the opening. But I was ready for him. Keeping my boot firmly pressed between the edge of the

door and the sill, I parried in such a manner as to throw his sword hard up against the jamb of the door, and pressing suddenly forward, snapped it short off below the hilt.

Giving them not a moment's time to recover, while they stood there fortifying themselves with curses, with one lusty push I felt the door yield, and stepped quickly over the threshold.

But while I engaged his companion, the rascal with the broken sword took to his heels and was out of the door like a flash; so that, being fearful he might have others of his ilk within calling, I gave my man a cut on the shoulder that caused him to abandon his sword and beg for quarter. Paying no further heed to him, I turned to look at the man whom I had seen lying on the floor. He was now sitting up in a corner supporting himself against the wall, and looking round in a dazed manner.

"How, sir; have the knaves done you an injury?" I asked, with alarm at his appearance and anxious to get him quickly out of that thieves' neighbourhood.

For a space he made no reply, sitting there as though dazed; but whether from the effects of a blow or being in the drowse of drink, I could not tell. Presently arousing himself, however, as the meaning of my words came to him, he replied with an effort, "Methinks, my friend, you have come in the nick of time"; and after waiting a moment, placing his hand



“ ‘How, sir : have the knaves done you an injury ?’ ”

— Page 12.

within his doublet, he added, "those villains would have had my life; as it is, they have failed even to rob me."

"Aye, sir!" I replied, impatient at what I took to be his cupidity at this time; "but I would remind you, sir, that you are not yet safe, nor will be till away from this den." So, offering him my hand as he attempted to rise, I presently had him on his feet testing his power to stand alone.

"Well, sir?" I asked again, expecting every moment to hear footsteps coming up the alley.

"Aye," he answered confusedly; "let us go."

Accepting the assistance of my arm, he passed out with me down the alley into Whitefriars Street, down which we turned, going towards the Temple stairs.

"I have a boat in waiting, sir," he explained. "Otherwise I should not have ventured through this nest of thieves in the plight I was in." He said nothing more at this time, I remember, about the company he was with. Yet I could hear him muttering to himself as we walked along, as though he were still striving to collect his wits, which seemed sadly scattered from the blow on the head which he explained those rascals had dealt him when I heard him cry out.

"Your name, sir?" he asked finally as we hurried on.

I replied, stating that I had but recently returned to England, and had been in the service

of Colonel Churchill at Maistricht and at Lenzheim.

"Churchill? Egad, that's good! The finest soldier in England."

At this moment we passed a tavern, a low dive, a glimpse through the window revealing shabby courtiers, painted courtesans, and ruined merchants, dwelling there in Alsatia under the shadow of the Temple, to avoid punishment for debts and greater crimes. And the scene brought me back to England as it was; setting me to thinking of the king and his royal mistresses, his bastard noblemen, his contempt for honour, and his broken compacts. Secure in his sins and secure in his kingdom under the protection of Whitehall, even as the Alsatians under the Temple walls. God knows I felt the dishonour of my country keenly! I know not what it was precisely; whether it was the brawling night, the sights we were passing at the time, or some sudden recollection of my own miserable condition that filled my soul with melancholy. But I became strangely conscious of a loathing of it all, and began to regret that I had not sold my sword—when I formerly had that opportunity—to the King of France, or, better still, to the Prince of Orange; for scenes like these, dominating equally o'er the rabble and the court, scarce gave a quittance to my then distemper.

"My friend," he continued, in slight em-

barrassment, "in sooth I know not how to thank you —"

"Nay, I prythee, sir, thank your lucky stars and let it pass. It was the merest accident."

He may have detected the slight bitterness with which I spoke, as a man will reply at times, when oppressed with gloomy thoughts, to those who, affluent themselves, he yet believes are powerless to assist him; seeming, in sooth, as though some overshadowing sense of loneliness would fain seize upon the heart and silence it, when the feet are upon the very threshold of release. Be that as it may, however, when next he spoke his manner was assuredly sympathetic. Turning squarely round—as we stood there on the Temple stairs overlooking the Thames—and placing one hand on my shoulder while observing me keenly, he said, —

"That is all very well, Sergeant Vivian; but at least, sir, I discover that you wear a good sword, and would reward you."

I bowed. "Pray do not speak of it, sir. Good-night."

"Nay; and it has a sharp tongue and speaks favourably," he urged. "Stay! have you any commission at present?"

"A commission, sir?" I cried, joyed at the very sound.

"Aye, hear me out," he continued. "My name is George Barton, and I am engaged in

trade with the colonies. To-morrow night a ship sails for Virginia, where I go to make extensive purchases on my own account and that of several merchant firms. Because of the seas being infested with numerous piratical craft, I wish to employ a guard besides that already afforded by the owners of the vessel. Select five reliable men, come with me, and I promise to make it worth your while."

The suddenness of the proposal fairly made my head whirl; for here at last was an opportunity almost too good, it seemed, to be real. Neither was life at sea distasteful nor unfamiliar to me, my first engagements having been with Prince Rupert against the Dutch. And yet the first thought of quitting England for the plantations was none too seductive to my mind, there having come to my ears naught save vague albeit uncommon bad reports of that far-off country. Fortunately, however, I quickly bethought myself of my necessities and of the emoluments the voyage promised, and so made out to accept his offer with more spirit than my feelings warranted at the time.

"Nay!" he replied hurriedly to my thanks; "the debt lies all on my side. I will pay you two hundred crowns, and allow two hundred more to be distributed among your five men as well as providing passage for the entire company. And now that you have accepted, sir, tell me where you can be found in the morning."

I gave him my address, my heart bounding in joyful surprise at his liberality ; and, again bidding him good-night, albeit in a happier mood, was about to return to my lodgings, when, rising from his seat in the boat he called :

“ Stay, my friend ; why not come with me now ? Take a glance at your new quarters, and stay the night.”

Being nothing loath, I accepted this time as I had the first. Pushing off from the stairs, our boat shot out down the river ; and, arriving at Blackwall, we were soon climbing up the sides of the *Henrietta Maria*.

Chapter II

On Board the *Henrietta Maria*

WHEN I awoke the following morning with the murmur in my ears of the gentle plashing of the Thames, I could not at first collect my wits. Then, as returning consciousness brought back the events of the night before, I could scarce contain myself at the good fortune that had so timely befallen me. I had no further regrets at thought of quitting England, my mind being already full of the adventure now in hand. When I reflected at all, it was only on the future. In fancy I could already see myself landing in Virginia, whither so many cavaliers and their families had fled during Cromwell's reign, when I was but a lad. So that it joyed me to look forward to seeing a country settled and controlled by a free people, and unmolested by the whims and extravagances of a profligate king.

Having many duties to perform before taking our departure that night, I hastened on deck and made inquiry after Master Barton, who shortly made his appearance, showing no signs of his last night's adventure. In sooth,

he appeared in all respects that which he was, the jovial, generous, reckless Virginia trader.

"Ha! my friend; it's business this morning, you perceive. No more cock-fights for a space, by my faith, sir!"

"Nay, but cheer up, sir," said I; "perchance we shall find amusement in plenty off the Carolinas."

"Aye, or lose my cargo," he admitted, becoming suddenly sober. "The last voyage taught me a lesson," he continued. "Muskets, pistols, and a sufficiency of ammunition — don't neglect the latter, sergeant, by all that's holy! Here are three hundred crowns," he continued, drawing a bag from within his doublet; "purchase your supplies, and give a small retainer to your men till they come on board. I leave all details to you. Only report here, with your command, by six o'clock to-night."

Promising not to disappoint him, I hailed a boat and, picking my way carefully between the large vessels constantly arriving and departing, soon found myself out into the open stream, moving quietly up the river. It was an uncommon fine morning, I remember, and my spirits rose with every minute of the day; for though of a melancholy habit when unemployed, my heart was quick to take fire again at any fresh adventure. Having space now to quickly think of such of my former comrades as were out of employment, by the time the

boat touched the stairs at Blackfriars I had decided on whom I should ask to accompany me.

Going up into Fleet Street, I had no sooner entered a coffee-house where I had hoped to find one whom I had in mind, than I was greeted by a quondam comrade, one Master Paul Seager, who was an ill mixture of a gentlemanly courtier and a lying rascal in the same breath. "How now, Sergeant Vivian!" he exclaimed; "methinks you tread the ground this morning with the air of a captain in the King's Guard."

I saw at once that the knave had read in my face—which had worn an air of despondency for the past six months—the exultant brightness which could only come from a change in my fortunes. But Master Seager being little to my liking, I replied shortly: "Aye, I have a commission."

"'Fore God! I congratulate you, John," he rejoined with all the frankness of a friendly soul in his manner; "it joys me, sir, to see a man of your skill get his just deserts now and then. Belike you are off to the Rhine?"

Though I knew this to be nothing more than lying flattery, such as was wont to flow from Master Seager's lips whenever he saw fit to first propitiate a friend that he intended shortly to take advantage of, and though I knew instinctively, as well as from earlier experiences with him, that when I turned my

head the rascal's face would take on another expression whilst his lips would play a quite different tune; yet, fool that I was, I confess — and I repeat it now with chagrin — that I was touched by the fellow's flattery and tone of sincere appreciation, as only the heart of a man, for many weeks without means and without friends, will be affected at times by slight praise, when flushed with the first joy of better fortunes.

So, whilst I scanned his features closely, I could see at this time only the knave's better side. And he was a person far from displeasing to look at; nay, he was even handsome — with his long sandy mustachios and fresh complexion — or would have been but for a sinister slant in his small blue eyes and a wrinkling of the lower lids that betrayed the whole face as that of a cunning rogue. Being christened Paul by his parents, he had grown up under that strange perversity of fate that, I have observed, so often wrecks the unfortunate bearer of an illustrious name. For of the manner of the apostle it was notorious that he possessed only one trait in common, and that a pernicious one, — of being all things to all men.

That he succeeded only too well in his plans of duplicity, to the utter discomfiture of his friends and the complete preferment of himself, I could well attest. As on one occasion in the battle of Türkheim, when, seeing a point of

vantage left open in the Imperialists' line, I made bold to occupy it by a sudden rally. My men being few in number, however, I had agreed with Master Seager for him to come up with his squad and assist me after the first skirmish was over and before the enemy could recover and drive us back. How well he fulfilled his promise I could not even now forget; for, waiting until the enemy had all but deleted my little command in the fierce recovery after their first surprise, whilst I was slowly forced to give way, then—and the moments seemed like hours—up comes Master Seager with his lusty knaves, and together we held our ground. But for this piece of work I was nearly reduced to the ranks for my vain temerity and the exposure of my command; whilst Seager,—the sly rogue!—for his keen perception and mastery of military tactics in thus seizing and occupying a strong position, was given unstinted praise and received personal recognition by Turenne.

“Well, Sergeant Vivian,” said Seager finally, as I sat there reviewing in my own mind the knave's fitness for the enterprise now in hand, “have you nothing to offer to a comrade in misery?”

He might have been jesting so far as any truth in his words was implied; for misery, as I had been taught the term by my own deplorable experiences, had ever been a stranger to Master Seager. On the contrary, the man was

finely arrayed, with a new velvet cloak and shining scabbard, serving but to make more glaring and ill-favoured my own shabby habiliments. So that I answered dryly: "No, Master Seager, I can report no adventure into which you would be like to fit."

"Come, come, Master John!" he urged good-naturedly; "in times like these beggars cannot be choosers."

"Not even a well-attired beggar, I presume," said I.

"Oh, as to these togs!" he sneered contemptuously, "I can easily explain their possession, if you care to listen." And though I had scant time or inclination to listen to him, he thereupon must needs tell me of his having been recently concerned in the abduction of a certain lady of rank from the king's court. For this he had been paid handsomely by a certain earl under whose protection the lady was now living. I had heard the tale before without knowing Seager's part in it; it having been bruited about for the past week that the king was so incensed at the loss of one of his favourites that he had privately placed a price on the head of the reckless kidnapper.

"And afterwards," said I, when he had done, "you must certainly have had a hole in your purse?"

"By my faith, sir!" he exclaimed impetuously, "you may well think that. But what

is a soldier to do in this damned town? Between their cursed cock-fights and bear-baiting I have lost my last crown and placed my head in danger as well. For God's sake, Sergeant Vivian," he continued with eager excitement, "if you have a commission and are in need of a good sword, do me the favour of seeking no farther!"

"Well, well!" I replied, touched by the man's solicitation, and quickly bethinking myself that in an adventure like the present one on board ship the knave would have little chance to play me false. "What would you say, Master Seager, to going out to the plantations?"

He gave a slight start of surprise as the remoteness of the country dawned upon him, then answered recklessly: "It is all the same to me; a soldier goes anywhere, you know, and just now," with a sly smile, "the farther from England the better for me."

Seeing the plight that the knave was in, therefore, and knowing him for a good sword when he chose to fight squarely, I decided to ignore my feeling against him and engaged him without further ado for the service of Master Barton. But for this leniency and willingness to assist a rascal who had once done me a wrong, I was to curse my folly in many a thwarted purpose in the days to come.

Telling him only as much of the nature of

the enterprise as I saw fit, therefore, and having agreed to pay him one hundred crowns on landing in Virginia, I named a rendezvous at the foot of Blackfriars Street at five o'clock that same afternoon. At that hour he was to be ready to leave England. But as I counted out ten crowns to him on account, he fumbled them a moment contemptuously whilst he sneered: "For fighting pirates, I suppose."

"Aye," I replied grimly, "if necessary."

"And for walking the plank likewise, if necessary," he added, shrugging his shoulders.

"Certainly, sir," I rejoined a little hotly; "you may back out if you choose."

"No, no, Master Vivian," he expostulated, suddenly changing his tone; "a mere jest, by my faith! In sooth, it has been many a day since you and I stood shoulder to shoulder fighting for the same cause; yet I trust you have not forgotten that, wherever the skirmish was thickest, there you could always find Paul Seager with his sword in good play."

Accordingly, but with the knave's braggadocio ringing in my ears, and exciting many grave doubts in my heart as to his sincerity, I arose and took my leave.

I still had sundry matters to look after before night; not the least of which was the employment of four sturdy fellows to complete our party. In this, however, I found little difficulty; for at that time many without employ-

ment were desirous of quitting England for the Colonies, hundreds having already gone over as bonded servants, and on arrival in Virginia, toiling for three or four years to repay the cost of their passage.

Knowing that the costly attire of Master Seager would do much to give him undue importance in the eyes of my little command, I next proceeded to purchase such articles of wear as I had long been in infinite need of. And, though I hold it to be but an idle vanity for a gentleman to apparel himself beyond the means of his purse, there be yet occasions when he must do so perforce in order to maintain his self-respect, as well as sometimes to administer a well-merited rebuke to the foppishness of his inferiors.

To this intent I made such improvement in my attire as good judgment did seem to warrant and suggest. Then, completing my other purchases and paying a few farewells, the hour being now nigh the time of departure, I sauntered at an easy pace to the foot of Blackfriars Street.

"God-'a-mercy, sergeant!" cried Master Seager, as he stood waiting there with my men. "Did I understand your Excellency to say that we were bound for Paris or the plantations?"

"For the plantations, sir, forsooth," I answered stiffly, affecting not to notice the envy in his tones. "Be so kind as to call a boat."

"Yes, your Excellency," he replied with a low bow, albeit of such courtliness that — though I knew his wiles — I could scarce find it in my heart to reprove him. But seeing him give a sly wink aside at one of my men, I remarked sternly : "Enough of that, Master Seager ! Be pleased to remember that you are earning honest money at my hands, and are amongst honest people."

"At your hands, sir?" he cried, being unable longer to mask his envy. "And how long, pray, has this honest money swollen your purse?"

"Tut, tut, you rascal ! that's neither here nor there," I cried ; and was on the point of dismissing him that very instant. But the hour was growing late, and the boat we had summoned was lying at the stairs in waiting for us even now. Hence it was that I continued sharply : "Make choice, sir ; go, or stay behind as you please !"

For a moment he hesitated ; then, as the other men were making for the boat, he turned and walked sullenly after them. So that even as the boat shoved off from the stairs I began to repent me of my folly in engaging him to accompany us.

The ship was nearly ready to weigh anchor when we arrived. But whilst I reported to Master Barton, he pointed out another boat for which we were delaying and that was now

rapidly approaching us from down stream. As it drew alongside, I counted, besides the sailors sitting at their oars, eight men securely fettered and bound. These appeared to be in charge of a long-faced, cadaverous knave, attired in glossy velvet, who sat in the stern-sheets, and now gave orders for delivering his party on board.

"As you love your liberty, sergeant," said Master Barton in a low tone, "I warn you to steer clear of that sleek villain in charge of those poor devils."

"You know him then, sir?" I asked, hearing my own misdoubt of him confirmed.

"Nay, my friend," he answered; "I know him for a spirit, and a damned wicked spirit at that! His name's Teed — Theodore Teed; and many's the poor knave that he has spirited into Virginia and sold for a good round sum."

"And this," I cried, between my wonder and contempt, "in broad daylight under the very shadow of Whitehall? Zounds, sir! what has the king done with that love for his subjects that he was wont to boast of fifteen years ago?"

"Tut, my friend," he replied blandly. "Be-like he has bartered it for the love of his mistresses; but that," he protested loyally, "is only between you and me. The king hates a row, sir; and the plantations being in need of men, he merely winks at deeds such as these, and allows the wrong to go on."

By this time the men were bundled on board and into the hold, but it was not till the following day, when we were far out at sea, that they were released and permitted to mingle among the rest. And, though I had heard somewhat of such occurrences, my curiosity over the fate of the unhappy wretches was such that I again spoke to Master Barton of the matter.

"Aye," said he at some length, "these men go to make up the Helots of the New World; numbering, I opine, some six thousand souls. On arrival in Virginia, they are sold by the spirit to the grandees for whatever they will fetch above the cost of their passage. At the planting season, of course, their services are in goodly requirement, and they command a very pretty figure."

"But do they submit, sir, like slaves?" I asked in astoundment.

"Perforce," said he, "until the cost of their purchase has been repaid in hard labour. Now and then one manages to effect his escape. But the penalty is such, in case of recapture, as to discourage many attempts at seeking their liberty. Look there," he continued, directing my eyes to a knave engaged in scrubbing the decks; "you see that letter 'R' branded into the man's cheek? That is the punishment for his second offence of running away from his owner. For the first, they are compelled to serve double the time; and if, driven to des-

peration, one dares to sling his gun over his shoulder and go amongst the Indians, he is to suffer death if captured."

"By my faith, sir, 'tis a rigorous discipline for a free country to adopt," said I in very pity.

"Free, sir?" he rejoined somewhat bitterly. "Nay, Master Vivian, Virginia can boast of precious little freedom as yet. But the day is not far distant when her own sons will declare for a quittance of divers evils. Not the least of these is her oppressive trade laws, by which, though her commerce has grown extensive, she is compelled to trade only with England and in English ships, whilst her exports are taxed a heavy duty on leaving Virginia, and again on arriving in England."

"A fine thing, no doubt, for men of your calling, Master Barton," said I respectfully.

"Yes, and no, sir," he replied frankly. "This is my sixth voyage to Virginia, and belike it will be my last. For the planters, unable to sell their great staple, tobacco, to any advantage, are even now diminishing or destroying their crop."

It was in such converse with Master Barton, that I began to know and feel an interest in Virginia. And as the days passed by on ship-board with little to disturb the serenity of the voyage for a space, — after the weathering of a five days' storm, — it pleased me to hold long and frequent speech with my generous employer.

From him I learned that the Virginians were at this time highly incensed with the king by virtue of his grant of the entire colony to my lords Culpepper and Arlington. These two courtiers—than whom no trickier ever breathed—now held the conveyance of land-titles in their own hands; the title of such lands as were already honestly held and occupied being now placed in dispute; this injustice supporting perforce a swarm of beggarly courtiers who occupied offices that were mere sinecures, save for the task of collecting moneys from the sale of lands and rents, the which they quietly placed in their own purses and said nothing.

“For this system of royal finance,” said Master Barton, “my lords Culpepper and Arlington did agree to pay the king the sum of forty shillings a year, on the Feast-day of St. Michael the Archangel, and may God have mercy on their souls!

“Then there are those rascally redskins, Master Vivian, of whom you will learn anon. Ever since the coming of the whites, it has been their wont to hold scalping receptions to the accompaniment of their own devilish merriment. Becoming weary of this, the settlers petitioned the governor to build forts along the frontier, to which they could flee for protection. Whereat the governor—” and breaking off suddenly, he added with a smile, “But you have forced me, my friend, to speak now

of that greatest incubus of all that rests upon Virginia."

"Breathe yourself, sir; breathe yourself," I protested, "the while I go drill our men for a space. The incubus, perchance, will scarce take flight for a pause?"

"Nay, my friend," he answered with a laugh. "Though I would for Virginia's sake that it might!"

With the assistance of Master Seager — whose temper had greatly improved since the sailing of the ship — I had drilled my men by the hour, until they had now become fair swordsmen and equally ready with the pistol. This I had done to the intent that Master Barton might find us of good avail and well worthy of his hire should occasion arise to put us to a test. Besides our own men, I had impressed, at their own willingness, the eight knaves in charge of Master Teed. And though these poor devils had but a listless eye at first, they had come to pluck up spirit again — as men will do at such times — upon the gad of daily drill.

Master Seager had just been displaying his skill with the rapier as I approached. Seeing me standing there now, he quickly challenged me and we saluted and fell to. Nor can I in good sooth deny his skill, wherein, putting aside the fact of a trained eye and dextrous wrist in which neither of us held the advantage,

he excelled me by just so much as his tricky nature did give him ready prompting. Likewise he oft befooled me by that subtle way of dropping his wrist suddenly for the radius of full ten inches, and then describing easily the entire circle with his hilt, the while his point never varied by so much as the fraction of a line.

So whilst the laugh was on me as he went on scoring points and plaudits against me, he cried out proudly: "Methinks, Sergeant Vivian, if you would kindly loan me your bonnet a second, I could show you a pretty trick."

"With all my heart, my friend," said I; though as I proceeded to give it him I added, "Promise you will do it no injury, Master Seager."

"Aye, sir, upon the honour of a gentleman," he assured me.

Securing my bonnet to a cleat on the foremast, I watched him the while he adjusted it. There was a silver pin securing the plume, whose head was set with a glittering jewel that did much delight me. Pressing it an instant till it lay flat against the mast, I now perceived his intent. But, the vessel rolling somewhat, I had scarce any fear of his success, and so again I warned him, —

"Remember, my friend, no harm to the bonnet."

"Twenty crowns to you if I touch it," he cried.

Then came an instant's poise, a swift lunge, whilst his rapier flashed and bent like a rainbow, and my jewel lay buried inches deep in the mast.

"'Fore God, sir, a noble thrust!" I could not help but exclaim. But, gazing ruefully at my bonnet as it still hung there with its eye put out, I turned to one of my men who carried a broadsword, saying: "And now, Master Seager, one hundred crowns to you if I so much as graze your skin or injure your doublet."

He paled a trifle at seeing me feel the edge of the good broadsword that the knave handed me,—and it was keen as a razor fresh from the hands of the cutler. Then with a swinging stroke, and ere he had time to mark my intent, I had slashed the rich baldric he wore clean through from the shoulder down to the waist.

"The devil!" he exclaimed in disgust as he glanced at the gaping strips. "A haberdasher could have done no worse with his little scissors."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Master Barton, mightily tickled. "Put your shoulders back, man! Keep it taut and 'twill never be noticed."

But he was not to be appeased, and strode from our midst in a sullen huff. So that a

whole day passed without his speaking civilly again to any of us.

It was in this wise, then, that some five and thirty days went by with little to vary the routine life on board ship. We had been hoping to hear the lookout sing out, "Land, ho!" for a day or two past. Until one day—and when we had long abandoned all apprehensions—what he did cry out was that a brig with tall rakish masts was bearing rapidly down upon us.

"Call up your men, Sergeant Vivian! I fear me 'tis a Carolina pirate," cried Master Barton excitedly.

There was no time to cut and run for it, the brig outsailing us at every point; and neatly tacking, she shortly came within hailing distance and ran up the black flag. Seeing that we were in for a battle, therefore, I quickly completed all our arrangements. Then, walking up to Master Teed, with whom I had scarce exchanged a word as yet, I requested him to give his men their freedom.

"How so?" he replied in miserly dismay; "who will repay me for their passage?"

"Pay you, you fool!" said I, there being scant time to bandy words. "The devil will pay you, belike, whilst you make ready to walk the plank."

"Sir!" he cried, his face flushing hot as he laid his hand on his hilt, "I'd have you know,

Master Sergeant, that I have no will to swallow insult from such as you."

"Tut, you peagoose!" said I contemptuously, "and mark what I say! You are to do my will in this. Give every mother's son of them his freedom this instant, or by the eternal, sir, when we stand by to repel boarders, you shall be the first knave to go over the rail!" And calling to Master Barton, I continued, as he came up: "Kindly bear me witness, sir, that because of the present uncertainty of any of us ever reaching Virginia, Master Teed now gives freedom to all his men."

"That I will, sir," answered Master Barton heartily. Whereupon I cocked my pistol with scant ceremony and watched Master Teed slink off to do my bidding.

Then, whilst our white flag was innocently run up, and the black hull of the brig with its grim-visaged crew came alongside and threw its grappling irons over us, we were prepared to give them a hearty reception. They expected no resistance, I opine, there being not more than a half score men to be seen upon our decks; our three cannon not being unmasked till the rascals began pouring over our sides.

Whereupon all was instantly changed. With our cannon pouring forth slugs and raking them fore and aft, our men sprang up from below and we pressed them back — back, over the rail and on to their own decks. Here we

fought hand to hand, till the decks grew slippery and the sun went down; till the last night-hearted knave had gone over the rail to perdition or begged upon his knees for quarter and the chance to become a Christian. Nor had I on this occasion—and I record it now in respect to his soul withal—any cause for misdoubting Master Seager; for I still remember his careless grace and smile disdainful as he engaged and deftly pinked their leader; whereat a pistol being suddenly thrust in his face by a swearing bully, the next instant I saw both pistol and the hand that held it go flying over the rail as the broadsword of one of my men came providentially into good play. Yet another lunge, and Master Seager stood wiping his sword.

But not to dwell too long upon a displeasing affair of this sort—it being but a common everyday occurrence off the Carolinas, the particulars of which, methinks, may in general well be left to the historian—I would add that the brig fell into our hands with all of its contraband cargo. And though our roll-call no longer sounded as many voices as formerly, several sailors and three of Master Teed's men lying silent and stiff, with two of my own sorely wounded, there was yet great rejoicing at our victory. For Master Barton concluded to buy the brig; and as we entered the mouth of the James River on the following day and began to

ascend the beautiful stream, he proceeded to give us goodly quittance, my share alone amounting to a thousand crowns.

So it joys me to boast that our ship, at least, brought no white slaves to Virginia ; and that, as we came to anchor off the little green isle of Jamestown, low-nestling in the arms of the river, there was not a man of us but had his passage paid, and a few crowns jingling cheerily in his pocket when he landed.

Chapter III

Master Lawrence's Ordinary

FOR nigh a week now I had been in Jamestown, observing quietly the place and manner of its people. Considering the disturbed state of the colony, I had so far found little to attract me, and still less to which I could safely attach myself with the limited means at my disposal. I was still keeping an eye open, however, and was greatly aided in this intent by the kindness of a Master Lawrence at whose ordinary I was stopping. He was a frank, affable gentleman, bred at Oxford University, whose conversation abounded with wit and wide learning. On coming to Virginia he had purchased a considerable estate, in which he had afterwards become involved at law with a corrupt favourite of his Excellency, Sir William Berkeley. By reason of a partial and unjust decision of the governor, Master Lawrence had lost his entire estate; but, as though fortune would still requite him, he had lately married a rich and attractive widow, with whom he was now engaged in running the ordinary.

I was sitting there in the yard of the ordinary one morning, at a table under a sweeping

oak, hearkening to Master Lawrence's strictures on the times, and seeking his counsel.

"Well, Master Vivian," he continued, in his frank, pleasant tone, "take my advice, and engage in nothing at present. Wait till you see our governor. Ha! ha! there's a man who could give the very devil hints on success."

Knowing that some men had hitherto been able to reap a handsome profit through trade with the savages, I asked: "What is this I hear, Master Lawrence, about the governor's having forbidden all trafficking with the Indians?"

"Aye, unless you wish to act only as his agent, — his accomplice, rather," he replied; "his Excellency will then be pleased to grant you a license, for and in consideration of, say, five hundred crowns, Master Vivian, or say, rather, for all the money you have to give! This will allow you to buy beaver-skins of the Indians, and make him a present as well of one out of every four skins you secure. An eminently just arrangement, is it not?"

"Zounds! you amaze me, sir," I exclaimed. "But why do the people not protest, appeal to the king? You elect your own burgesses and make your own laws; why do you continue to let yourselves be ruled by a tyrant?"

"Hush!" he whispered; "not so loud, not even here in my own premises. Protest, you ask? Appeal to the king? Why, our Assem-

bly has remained unchanged for fourteen years. It is our long parliament, you know. And Berkeley!" he added with a laugh, "why, he's our Protector. And as for the king—pish! You who have fought for him, Sergeant Vivian; would you have faith in an appeal to his Majesty from Virginia? No, he is too—too occupied, let us say. Besides, he has but lately sold us for forty shillings a year."

I could make no reply, remembering what Master Barton had told me of the colony's travail, in favourable refutation of Master Lawrence's words. And yet, though I wished to remain in the land, I saw before me such fearful obstacles of tyrannical misrule to first be overcome ere any one could prosper, that I was tempted to banish all desire.

"Yet Sir William is a wise man," Master Lawrence continued. "Verily, he has all the learning of a priest and all the hatred for it—in others—of a Puritan. He forbids us schools and printing—calling them devices of the devil which he hopes we won't have these hundred years. Ha! ha! ha! And if any one would be so reckless as to run counter to his wishes in this respect, behold! Sir William will stand before him and accuse him out of the mouth of his worthy brother, Jack Cade: 'Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm in erecting a grammar school; and whereas, before our forefathers had no other books than

the score and tally, thou hast caused printing to be used, and, contrary to the king, his crown and dignity, thou hast built a paper-mill! ’’

Hearing footsteps approaching, however, we ceased our talk abruptly, and looked up just as a young maiden appeared coming down the winding lane past our seats. She was, I should judge, about the age of twenty, slightly above the average height, and of a graceful, well-rounded figure. There was something imperious, I remember, in her carriage, implying a certain hauteur ; which was instantly belied, however, by the sweetness of her face. She was attired all in white, with a broad hat covered with white lace and resting on a mass of wavy brown hair caught up in a loose knot on the back of her head. Whilst under the chin—and it might have been chiselled of marble, so calm yet beautiful it was—two broad white bands, loosely tied, held the hat in position, the ends falling away at her side as though in pettish reluctance. In one hand she carried a small bunch of wild flowers yet wet with the dew, and in the other she trailed a cardinal’s cloak of rich scarlet cloth trimmed with ermine, its folds falling softly over her arm.

“ Good-morning,” cried Lawrence, a touch of tender raillery in his voice, as he jumped to his feet and made a low bow, his hat sweeping the ground. “ Bound on an errand of mercy, Mistress Zoe, by my troth ! ”

"Only for myself, Master Lawrence," she replied with a smile. "I am only out for a walk in the woods."

"It is all the same, my dear ; 'tis the greatest mercy of all," Lawrence rejoined. "Only keep the roses in your cheeks, and the people will yet live to feel the blush of hope in their hearts." She turned and gave him a pleased smile, and passed on down the lane leading to the river.

"There goes a girl—a woman," continued Lawrence to me, resuming his seat, "who does more for Virginia to-day than king and governor together."

Wondering as much at the beauty of the maiden as at the strangeness of Master Lawrence's words, I could only ask, "Who is she, pray?"

"That girl who just passed," Lawrence continued, a tone of affection plainly audible, "God bless her! is Mistress Zoe Langdon, a niece of Governor Berkeley! I have known her ever since she was a little tot of five years, when she came here to live at her uncle's some fifteen years ago. Poor little miss!" his voice growing softly reminiscent, "her parents were killed by a sudden Indian outbreak at that time, on their own plantation above Green Springs. It all happened before the child's eyes, and she, fainting away, the red fiends left her there, thinking she was dead. The governor has become attached to her as though she

were his own child. This much I will say in his favour : he seems to have as much affection for her as for his wife, and he thinks as much of his wife — the old rogue ! — as he does of himself.

“ In this way,” he continued, “ Mistress Zoe has come to stand between the governor and his people — or his prey — like Antigone of old in that fine play of Sophocles’s, standing ever between her brothers and the conquering Fates. With her sweet womanly instinct she has come to understand the needs of Virginia better than that bigoted old fool, her uncle, ever has throughout his long and mistaken career as the king’s vicegerent. Still, the girl has never plotted nor intrigued for her uncle’s undoing, but simply to stay his hand at evil times and so thwart him from recklessly working his own downfall in the respect and affections of his people.”

“ A fortunate thing for the people, in truth, sir,” I answered, “ that they have such a glorious mistress to ever plead their cause. But will the time never come, Master Lawrence, when the colony will be freely in the hands of the people ? ”

“ Wait,” he said ; “ Sergeant Vivian, a change is coming, and that before many days are past. Even now trouble is brewing. The Indians are gathering their forces, whilst that old rascal, his Excellency, is furnishing them arms and ammunition through his agents — his licensed traders — almost, one might say, as though he

were trying to force us into rebellion. 'Rebels' forfeitures will be loyal inheritances,' you know. But the madame is calling me, sir. Coming! coming! my dear!" he cried out to his wife standing in the doorway of the ordinary. And telling me to make myself free about the place, he took his leave.

Scarce had he left me, however, than my mind returned to the lady who had passed; and remembering that I had seen Seager precede her down the lane less than half an hour before, and that—unscrupulous fellow that he was, in the guise of a gentleman—he was not above offering insult to a lady when unprotected, I presently arose and strolled after them that I might be within easy call if required.

Through the dense growth of willow and white birch, and beneath the arching of the branches over the pathway, the vista was at all points charming and beautiful, though wont to be somewhat abrupt and irregular. At places I could now and then catch a glimpse, through the tangled shrubbery, of the tawny outline of the James sparkling in the sunlight; quickly obliterated, however, by some sudden turn, rise, or descent in the pathway.

I was walking meditatively along with my eyes cast down, I remember, picking my way along the uneven ground, when I discerned all at once—and almost beneath my feet—the bright glint that could come only from the

polished facets of a gem as it reflected the sunlight slanting through the foliage. Stooping over, I picked up a ring curiously set with a brilliant jewel; and whilst I stood there wondering how it could have been lost and overlooked directly in the pathway, I chanced to glance to one side, where, peeping beneath the leaves and grass of a little hillock, a bed of violets grew. Those nearest to me, I saw, had been recently plucked, the leaves somewhat crushed and disordered, whilst beyond, and fairly out of reach of any one standing there in the pathway, hundreds of blue heads nodded with the weight of the dew.

And then the memory of the flowers Mistress Langdon had carried returned to me, and I conjectured that in plucking the violets the ring had slipped from her finger unnoticed or forgotten, and rolled down into the path. Hence I hastened onward, resolved to return the ring at once. And then again I faltered and stood still; for in sooth it might not be hers. So that I began suddenly to wax hot and cold by turns at thought of the consequences of my vain presumption in daring to address her on some frippery device of a ring picked up by the wayside. "Sir! Sir! Sir!" I fancied I could hear her say in tones now grateful and anon ringing in scorn. And by my troth! even were it hers how was I to acknowledge her thanks? I, Sergeant Vivian, who wot little



“Feeling my face grow hot with embarrassment as I handed her the ring.” — Page 47.

of woman's ways, and, such being my nature, would sooner stand before the cannon's mouth in fair battle any day than to be facing a beautiful woman passing those — to me — deadly pleasantries of gallantry as are wont to ensue on such occasions.

But whilst I continued to stand there like a perdieu, unable to retreat or to go forward, and half resolved to hand the ring to Master Lawrence when I returned to the ordinary, telling him where and how I had picked it up, and my ideas — my apprehensions even — of its ownership, I detected the lady in person approaching me. She was walking very slowly, her eyes bent on the ground, so that she could not have seen me until quite near. Then, as I stood aside to let her pass, she suddenly raised her eyes to my face, and, in a clear, sweet voice, she said, —

“Sir, I have lost a ring somewhere along the way you have just come. You may have seen it perhaps?”

“Yes, my lady,” I replied, bowing and sweeping my bonnet; “I did pick up a ring but a moment ago.”

“Then why did you not offer it to me, sir?” she demanded impatiently, and frowning with displeasure.

“I was not sure,” I stammered, feeling my face grow hot with embarrassment as I handed her the ring; “I was going —”

"Aye, you were going by, that is sure!" she interrupted haughtily, but looking at me with such an arch expression that, in my witless state, I could not tell whether she were only teasing me, or meant to hand me over to her uncle's officers for purloining her jewellery. With thoughts of this luckless possibility, my wits happily returned, as they ever do in times of real danger. So that, determined not to let her think so ill of me, I said, with all the honesty of voice I could command, —

"If your ladyship will pardon me, I meant only to say that I intended giving the ring to Master Lawrence, at whose ordinary I am stopping, that he might deliver it to its rightful owner."

Continuing to stare at me distrustfully, as though she would seek the truth of my words in my face, she asked, though seemingly as much of herself as of me: "I wonder if the knave is to be trusted?"

I own that I did not know what to say. Never before, I thought, had I been so mercilessly misjudged, and all because of that equivocal timidity of mine in failing to ask if she had lost the ring, and then offering it to her in the manner of a courtier without her having to first question me like a thief. Howbeit, I was more incensed with myself, I remember, than with her, as she stood there now demurely plucking the white petals from a daisy as though,

forsooth, she would read my character after the dire custom of "rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief." Nevertheless, bowing low, I was turning away with considerable heat, when she cried: "One moment, sir! You have not given me your name?"

"John Vivian, my lady, at your service," I replied, bowing again; and was for going on down the lane.

"Stay! Master Vivian," she replied in an altered tone, her face lighting into a confident smile, "I believe that I may trust you, and may God help me if I be mistaken! Listen," she continued; "would you be willing to execute a commission for me, sir?"

"With all my heart," I replied, my former feeling of embarrassment and chagrin suddenly passing. "Nor shall the confidence you choose to repose in a stranger be regretted, my lady."

"It is loyally said, sir," she answered fervently. "But I must not be seen speaking with you. Say to no one that you have met me, sir, and be at the north gate of Governor Berkeley's mansion at nine o'clock to-night. I shall have a message for you."

And giving me no time to reply, she made a courtesy and was gone.

I remained standing there a moment, watching her until she was out of sight. Then, my mind full of this sudden meeting and the adventure that it promised, I turned, and resumed

my walk. Oh, to be in action again! To feel myself a factor of some moment in helping to sustain the fortunes of some lofty cause! Beneath the repose of these southern skies and blissful days of early June, a sullen volcano of discontent and long-suppressed public opinion was smouldering; nor could it be many days now at the rate that the differences between the governor and the people kept multiplying, ere the flames would burst forth and the country be plunged into the midst of a civil war, where Church and State, Assembly and Governor, would come together with clash of arms the while the Indians played havoc along the border outposts of civilization. And whilst civil war is terrible, methinks that tyranny is worse. That the Virginians were a patient people, slow to become aroused, I had quickly discovered. Her trade had become extensive, her products rich and varied; some eighty ships arriving and departing from England during the course of a single year. Yet, ground under the heel as she was, her very richness had served only to excite the greed of her rulers the while they continued to plunder her.

Despite these thoughts of impending danger, therefore, I remember that I was conscious of a great buoyancy of spirits as I thought of it all. The woods were never greener, and the birds never sang sweeter than on that morning of my meeting with Mistress Langdon. In

sooth I saw at every turn, and by the steady impellent of my surroundings, that I was being drawn into the swift-flowing current of events; nor had I any doubt that the message she meant to entrust to me had to do with some plans for furthering the well-being of the people, else would she not be concerned in it. Master Lawrence, indeed, would understand its meaning; but to Master Lawrence, or to any one else, I was forbidden to speak. And so, with the thought of soon having the message fresh from her own lips, I contented myself to wait.

I had now reached a point where the lane made straight for the river, but as I turned to retrace my steps I discovered some one step out from under cover of the woods where I had passed, and start to come towards me. Seeing me returning, however, he appeared to hesitate a moment; then, as though changing his mind, he came straight on again. Yet I soon found it was only Master Seager, whom until this morning I could not recall having seen for several days, our habits throwing us but rarely together. However, chancing to meet him there suddenly, I now remembered having seen him only the day before, accompanied by two of the men whom we had brought with us from England, — Masters James and Lewis. They were chatting at the time I saw them with some of the governor's guard, with whom they seemed to be on very good terms

as they sat there drinking in front of the Sailor's Yarn down by the river.

But I had come, somehow, to feel such a loathing and distrust of the man that I hated to see him darken the path as he approached me that morning. My face must certainly have revealed my feeling towards him quite plainly; but such was the composure of the fellow, he so affected to disregard any formality in my manner, that he began at once on the subject that was evidently uppermost in his mind.

"There's going to be the devil to pay in Virginia before long, Master John," he said soberly, after greeting me.

"Well," I returned dryly, "and you will stay to help pay your share, I opine?"

"Ha! not I, sergeant," he replied. "I think too much of my hair to engage in their damned border warfares. Give me a Frenchman, or a Dutchman — any one who fights in the open."

"Then why not return to England, sir?" I asked, wanting to pass on and leave him. "You are two hundred crowns the better for the voyage."

"Now you have said it for me, Master John," he replied with a quick sigh of relief. "I have been robbed, sir, by a set of these desperate adventurers who have been swarming into the colony, and am without a crown to assist myself."

"Faugh!" I returned in swift disgust at his story. "You dare come to me, Seager, and say that you, who have played the chances of life for high stakes among the cleverest knaves the world over, have been swindled of your money here in Virginia? Robbed!" I sneered sarcastically; "tricked with cards by some planter in homespun, belike."

"So help me heaven, sergeant!" he exclaimed in eager protest, "what I tell you is the truth. O John! I beg of you, don't look at me like that. Remember how you persuaded me to come with you to this raw country, and for the honour of old days, sergeant, give me the favour of a little assistance for a time."

Though I smiled queerly at his reference to my persuading him to come with me to Virginia, and could do naught but doubt the story of his losing two hundred crowns in scarce a week's residence in Jamestown, yet was I moved sufficiently by his appeal to be willing to extend him a word of caution looking to his present and future well-being here in the colony. So—and with the willingness to assist a comrade to stand on his own feet—I turned to him, saying, —

"Listen, Seager! What you have heard is true. Lively times are coming here in Virginia, when any man drawing as good a sword as you should be able to step quickly to the front."

Waiting a moment to mark the effect of my words upon him, I saw at once — and should have been warned by it at the time — that he had but scant inclination to fight for a matter so meaningless to him as the rights of a free subject. Replying airily, in a manner that belied his alleged present necessities, he said: "I tell you, sergeant, that I want nothing to do with these troubles between the governor and the Virginians. That old bull-dog of a Berkeley is ever on the watch sharp after his rations, and ready to eat any one up who opposes him."

"Then what the devil do you come begging round me for?" I exclaimed, swiftly lowering my guard in hot impatience at the fellow's pusillanimity. "I can have no work for such as you."

"'Fore heaven, sir!" he returned in well-feigned surprise, "how could you expect me to know you had embraced the cause of the Virginians? I took you for a soldier in the king's service at all times."

Chagrined and more than half angry with myself that I had let him into the secret of my affairs so easily, I bade him a curt good-morning, and was turning to leave, when he cried out: "I beg a thousand pardons, sergeant, if I have said aught to offend you. But you know my own plight, sir. I was not born to die with a halter round my neck fighting for

the freedom of an ill-starred colony against the king. You understand, sir," he urged, "I am sure."

Aye, I understood very well. I saw that whatever I did now, whichever way I turned for a shift on my own part, I must ever have this knave for an assistant or run the fear of his checkmating me. But realizing that he could know nothing of my plans, and resolving to be closer-mouthed hereafter, the idea of his causing me any inconvenience never occurred to me. Accordingly, as I would need a companion on my ride that very night — and knowing no man in Jamestown who could so ably support me if recompensed for it — I thought best to appease and reassure him by manifesting some concern in his welfare.

"Where are you staying, Seager?" I asked.

"Down below, sir," he replied, pointing to the lane leading to the river, "at the Sailor's Yarn."

"Very well," I answered, with as much nonchalance in my voice as I could assume; "though I have no employment to offer any one now, I may have work in a few days. Here," I continued, offering him a guinea; "this will relieve your present necessities, I presume?"

"God bless you, sergeant!" he answered; "it's the most generous deed ever done to a comrade in hard luck." Then, bidding me farewell with every protestation of loyalty and good will, we parted.

That same afternoon I took occasion for a stroll about the outlying points of the town, that I might know the position of the main highways leading in and out of the capital of Virginia. In the town the houses, for the greater part, were built of brick, a number of log houses peeping out here and there from small clearings in the woods in the outskirts of the town. Save for a narrow glistening stretch known as Sandy Beach, and which was the only approach from the outlying country, the town was entirely surrounded by water. The James, however, afforded all the conveniences — and more of the grandeur — of a great public highway which was quite generally resorted to, being dotted with small craft of various kinds owned by well-to-do planters.

Keeping the main outlines well in mind, I went on to the mansion of Governor Berkeley that I might view the surroundings before nightfall. I found the place to be located on rising ground, a little way back from the town; whence a wide highway led through the woods straight on to the edge of a clearing, covering about fifty acres, in the centre of which stood the mansion.

Standing now at the eastern gateway with its tall and rough-hewn stone pillars, I gazed down a long vista, between lofty pines, to where the gravelled walk led up to the stone steps of the main entrance. Here a verandah extended

nearly the entire front of the building, with Ionic columns supporting a broad flat roof, surrounded with a low railing. The building itself, I could presently see, was of brick, alternately dull and glazed, two full stories in height, topped with a half story set with a steep roof, and dormer windows peeping from out a green tangle of creeper and ivy. Continuing on up the road a piece, I discovered that the outbuildings were of the same material, and arranged in the form of a hollow square approached by a colonnade. The yard, I remember, was at that time trimly kept; the giant pines and splendid oaks rearing their branches high in the air as though they felt the responsibility upon them of playing their share in maintaining the loftiness and dignity of his Majesty's loyal servant in Virginia.

I next made out that the north gate — which Mistress Langdon had named for our meeting — was approached by a narrow, gravel walk, leading from the north portico of the mansion. Hence I should be obliged to leave the highway at a point a hundred yards above where I now stood, and to travel a piece in the woods in order to reach it, unless I chose to pass boldly across the lawn and run the risk of arrest and detention at the hands of the governor's guard.

Returning to the ordinary, I observed proper caution the balance of the day in keeping a

seal on my lips. Letting no one know of my assignation for that evening, as the hour approached I quietly left the room. Retracing my steps of the afternoon, I went straight on past the mansion, and, turning into the woods, soon arrived — my heart beating tumultuously, I remember — at an open space by the north gate, there to await the coming of my lady.

Chapter IV

The Heart of Virginia

I HAD not long to wait, however, ere I saw a door open from the mansion, and in the light that streamed forth I could see two figures pass out on to the walk. After a few moments I made out the sound of approaching footsteps on the gravel walk, and the voice of Mistress Langdon.

"Stay here, Katy," she said. "I shall only be gone a moment."

Stepping forward from the shadow of the trees, I advanced a few paces down the walk until challenged, "Who is there?"

"It is I, my lady; John Vivian," I answered quietly.

"Ah, you are punctual, sir," she replied in a voice wherein I could detect a quick sigh of relief. "And for this I shall be the more willing to trust you, perchance."

Bowing low, I protested that she need feel no further concern on that score.

"Then listen, Master Vivian," she began in rapid tones. "I would have you carry a mes-

sage for me to Curles on the upper James. Do you know the way, sir?"

"No, my lady," I replied; "yet it is easily found, belike."

"Very well, sir," she continued. "You are to call at the Bacon plantation, and tell Mistress Betty Bacon that the ship *Adam and Eve* left Jamestown this evening for Curles, with orders from Governor Berkeley to arrest her husband for a rebel. Assure her, sir, of my love and consideration; but warn her that his Excellency is very wroth, and that it were well for her husband to lie hidden for a space until the burgesses convene."

"That is all, my lady?" I asked, as she came to a pause.

"Aye, it is all, sir; and perchance of little significance to you unless you know the trend of affairs in Virginia," she answered. "So would I advise you, Master Vivian, that upon the prompt conveyance of this message there may rest the life of a noble gentleman, who is in every way necessary to the cause of freedom in Virginia. This much I do, then, without regard for the love I bear Mistress Betty Bacon herself."

"In this commission, my lady," I replied with feeling, "and in all others, I shall be proud to do your service. Your message shall be delivered as quickly as a good horse can carry me."

"Stay!" she returned directly. "The wind blows from the westward, Master Vivian, and you can easily overhaul the ship by waiting till moonrise. Methinks such will be about an hour to midnight. Have you a horse, sir?"

"No, my lady, I am only recently from England," I replied.

"Then go to Master Dale's stables. Tell him to loan you his gray," she continued, "and provide you with a guide to Curles. A report has lately come in that the Indians are rising again in the up-country. But, thanks to Nathaniel Bacon, sir, methinks you need have little fear on this score. Still, 'tis always well to be prepared in these days."

Again I thought that I detected a note of care and anxiety in her voice as she thus particularized. To reassure her, therefore, I said, "I have trusty men —"

"Hush!" she exclaimed sharply. "What was that?"

I was on the alert in an instant. But after listening intently, and hearing only the snapping of a twig as of a bird in the branches overhead, I answered quietly, —

"Nay, my lady; I heard naught, I believe."

Quickly recovering herself, she laughed lightly whilst a mocking-bird began whistling above us. "I am forever hearing fearsome sounds nowadays, sir, where I formerly heard

naught. But may God speed you, Master Vivian. I shall go in now."

"By your leave, Mistress Langdon, I shall guard you to the door," said I as she turned to depart.

"Oh, no, sir," she protested; "my maid is waiting." But, hesitating a moment, she continued: "It troubles me to think, though, that at a time like this when suspicion is rife, your message may not be trusted at Curles."

"There is yet time, my lady, if you choose to indite a missive."

Reflecting a moment, she answered: "No, Master Vivian, we'll let it pass; though, by my faith, it was a witless act. But here!" she continued hastily, "do you show this ring to Mistress Bacon, sir; it is oddly set, and, having seen it oft, I doubt not that she will recognize it."

With this she handed me the ring, which I accepted with a low bow. But whilst I was placing it in my doublet, she said archly, — and I knew that she was laughing at me under cover of the darkness, — "You might at least have been gallant enough to wear it, sir."

So sudden was my surprise at these words, that in my confusion I stood there fumbling awkwardly with the ring for a space that seemed to me to cover several moments. And ere I could collect my wits, she added: "Come, sir,

I swear no wight shall serve me so. I prythee hand it back !”

“But, my lady,” I began to murmur, as I quickly did her bidding, “if I had —”

“Chut !” she said sharply ; whilst for an instant I felt my hand retained, and the ring slipped deftly over my finger. Then, swiftly turning, and with a laugh that betokened more of a blithe diablerie than of aught else, she cried : “Good-night, Master Vivian, and may God be with you !”

The next moment she had disappeared in the darkness. Yet again I heard her voice saying, “Come, Katy” ; then stood there listening to the footsteps retreating down the path until I saw the door of the mansion open and two figures pass within the light. And whilst I continued to wait there, between marvelling and worshipping, the mocking-bird in the branches overhead did pour out such an in-souled rapture of music as I had never heard, whereof every note seemed to echo in my heart. And in sooth it is the maddest of songsters, with its notes stolen from divers throats in seasons sad and joyous. So that I remember as I hearkened to its song that night, bursting out into glad pæans one moment but restrained the next as though by the very melancholy and soul sadness of oppression, I bethought myself of Virginia. Wherefore at one moment I was thrilled,

it seemed, by all the gladness that life could bestow ; whilst the next, swiftly recalling the nature of my errand, I felt for an instant a sense of all the bitterness it held as well.

Leaving the premises of Governor Berkeley, I set off down the highway in the direction of the stables kept by Master Dale, whose nags I knew to be famous for their breeding and good qualities. Approaching the premises, I detected a lanthorn swinging in the open doorway ; and as I came up I made out by the dim light that it shed a number of coaches and vehicles, trimly kept, and all of the latest and most fashionable designs then in vogue in London.

In response to my heavy footsteps on the rough board floor, a tall brawny fellow, heavily bewhiskered, came out of an adjoining room and inquired my business.

"I must have a horse to-night, sir," I replied briskly ; "or, rather," bethinking myself that I should not go alone, "three of them, my friend. And only such as are able to carry three men of goodly weight on a continuous ride of fifty miles."

Paying scarce any heed to my request, he scanned me sharply from head to foot. "In what direction, pray," he asked finally, "would you be travelling at this late hour ?"

I was as much astonished, I remember, as irritated by the man's inquisitiveness. But,

attributing it to the love of his nags and unwillingness to let them go out with a stranger at that late hour, I replied curtly: "Where I am travelling, sir, is my own affair. Here are three hundred crowns for the return of the animals, and a fair sum for their use until that time."

"You may keep your money, sir," he answered dryly. "My horses are not for hire."

"What the devil do you mean?" I demanded impatiently. "I was told that I could be accommodated here."

"And who told you that?" he asked in cool indifference, whilst he picked up a coarse broom and began sweeping the dirt back from the doors as though he would close them for the night.

Seeing, perforce, that the man had an obstinate will of his own, and that I was only losing time by parleying with him, I smothered my wrath the while I bethought myself of Mistress Langdon's words. Then, knuckling to his mood for the nonce, I replied, —

"Why, sir, I was told by Mistress Langdon to call for your gray nag — if it be any concern of yours to know who sent me."

"And it is, sir!" he exclaimed, dropping the broom, so that I smiled to note the sprightly change in his manner. "It concerns me, as well as others, a great deal. You shall be ac-

commodated as quickly as you desire, and need say naught about the pay. Only you see, sir," —and he looked at me knowingly,—"it behooves us to act cautiously."

"Yes, yes," I replied; "I understand, and shall know the word to your favour another time."

"Belike, sir," he answered; "for sometimes my nags are for hire, and then again, sometimes they are not. Will you start at once, sir?"

"No, Master Dale; kindly have them ready, and I will call with my men when the moon is up." And, with a few instructions as to how I liked my saddle placed, leaving the selection of the nags entirely to himself, I took my leave.

Going on towards the Sailor's Yarn, I reflected on the secret understanding which, I had observed, pervaded all classes in Virginia at this time, so strongly was the favour of the people turning from the governor and setting towards Master Bacon. Nor could I wonder much at this as I thought of the last trick his Excellency had played them on the frontier. When, in response to their appeal for protection against the Indians, with a fine sense of humour he had readily acquiesced to their demands by building a line of forts, absurdly inadequate, yet affording a subtle excuse to tax them roundly on their tobacco for this beneficent protection. And when the people — and

God help all such everywhere, say I ! — dared to murmur against this high insurance on their lives, then did his Excellency, Sir William Berkeley, disdainfully forbid all further trifling on this matter under threat of heavy penalty.

Arriving at the tavern, I at once made inquiry for Master Seager. But to no avail. Seeking out the keeper, therefore, I asked, “ Did Master Seager leave any word with you, sir ? ”

“ No, sir,” he answered courteously ; “ I saw him go out some two hours ago.”

Trusting that he would shortly return, I waited round well-nigh an hour. Then, fearing that he was in his cups, perchance, and might long be absent, I asked after James and Lewis. But they, likewise, were out. Whereupon I took my departure, albeit with much disappointment. For I well knew the value of Master Seager’s assistance in a tight place, and, knowing the disturbed state of the country, I apprehended some little difficulty in making the ride to Curles. I therefore retraced my steps towards Master Lawrence’s ordinary, stopping only by the way to pick up another of my former command, one of the brothers Henry, who agreed to hold himself in readiness at the appointed hour at Master Dale’s stables.

I had still to find a guide, however ; so kept straight on to the ordinary, where I conjectured

that this could be readily effected. Lifting the latch, I remember being struck as I entered the tap-room by the numbers there at that late hour; for Jamestown was a quiet place, and one early to retire, and as for Master Lawrence, being a gentleman of culture and refinement, he did ever keep an orderly house. Howbeit, the place was wont to throb responsive and in nice sympathy with the life of the colony. On this night there was considerable stir in the air. Men were sitting round the tables, drinking modestly, but speaking with some heat of the incidents of the day. Whilst over at one side of the room, a little group was gravely discussing certain ominous presages that they had recently observed.

"As I came over the hill this night by the governor's mansion," one of the men remarked, "I saw a great comet like a horse's tail streaming westward."

"God a' mercy, John!" answered a strapping youth with a wink sidewise at the rest; "did the thing enter at his Excellency's door?"

"Nay, Master Clarke," quoth John, perceiving that the others were laughing at him in misdoubt; "but it were an instrument of Providence if it had."

"Faith, you are right, John!" admitted Master Clarke frankly, amid the jeering of the crowd.

"But that is naught, Master Clarke," spoke

up a venerable patriarch whose long gray hair fell over his shoulders. Removing the stem of an Indian pipe from his mouth, he continued, in a voice of earnest cogency: "It is naught, sir, to the sight I saw yesternight just after sundown. I was standing at the rear of my plantation down by the river. Looking up, whilst the sun set with a red glow, I saw, nigh a quarter of the mid-hemisphere, flights of pigeons that of their length was there no visible end. 'Twere a sight to shudder at," he continued slowly, "and did remind me of the same that I saw more than fifty year ago, the night before we were attacked by Opechancanough."

This time, however, no one had the hardihood to laugh. Nor was this merely out of respect to the man's white hairs, for I doubt not that there were many present to whom the words were fraught with a dire significancy. The mere mention of the name of that old chief, brother to Powhatan, was sufficient to silence all for a space; for there were those present who remembered and shortly began to speak of the chief's last battle some thirty years ago. Then it was Sir William Berkeley who led them to victory; and it was strange to remark the look of astonishment that swept over the faces of the younger portion of the listeners, as their elders went on to relate of this same Sir William Berkeley, his Excellency, whom they were now all so heartily

execrating. At that time he was a dashing young courtier fresh from the court of the first Charles. At that time, so all admitted, he was brave and honest and loyal, and won every Virginian's heart by his charming manners and lavish hospitality. But ah! at that time the iron had not entered into his soul; his king had not been beheaded; nor had he himself, after being called a royal rebel, been thrust ignominiously out of his high office after holding out against the Commonwealth for full two years.

Whilst I listened to the Virginians' accounting of the aged cavalier, learning how, when the king's men were up again, he had resumed his duties of governor, and, never a liberal mind, had returned more zealous in his bigotry, more rabid in his intolerance, and more bitter in his tyranny, — then did I greatly marvel at this trick of the vafrous devil, whereby he ofttimes claims his own when a man's years should grant him holy quittance.

I was about leaving the room when Master Lawrence, beckoning me aside, acquainted me with a Master Drummond. "My friend Drummond," said Master Lawrence, "is from the Carolinas."

"Ah," I answered laughingly, as we clasped hands, "methinks that I have met men from there before."

"Ha! ha! my friend," laughed Master Law-

rence, "you have the jest upon him, I fear me." Whereat he related briefly to Master Drummond my encounter with the Carolina freebooters.

"Yes, Sergeant Vivian," he made answer cordially, but speaking in a broad Scotch accent; "things are in but a sorry plight in the Carolinas. Thanks be to his Excellency!"

"And what of the Indians, sir," asked Master Lawrence, "along the Nottoway and in the up-country?"

"I learn they are gathering, sir,—the red devils!" he replied. "You may believe that it takes scant time for them to learn that his Excellency has refused to grant Master Bacon his commission to go out against them."

For a space I waited, hearing them speak of Master Nathaniel Bacon and the gathering disaffection of the people, until, the hour being close upon eleven, seeing Master Clarke pass out, I arose and set out after him.

"Master Clarke!" I called out, coming up behind him a few paces down the road.

Turning on hearing his name called, he recognized me as I came up. "You are Sergeant Vivian, sir, I believe?" he said.

"Yes," I answered; "I am in need of a guide to Curles. Would you be pleased to engage, sir?"

"Perchance, sir," he ventured pleasantly.

"Yet I should first like to know more of your intent."

"Of a surety," I admitted; "I am carrying a message to Master Bacon. Yet by my faith, sir, wherefore all this inquisitiveness is more than I can say!"

"Nay, Sergeant Vivian," he replied gravely. "But mayhap had your own brother been hanged for daring to ask how the revenues of the colony were disbursed, you likewise would learn the need of caution. Such is my position. Yet I am now at your service, sir."

"Your pardon, Master Clarke," I cried hastily, seeing that I had but ill bespoken him. "In all fairness, sir, let me explain that I have had scarce any experience as yet with the life of a free colony."

Chuckling slightly, he replied: "I prythee, sir, do not speak of it, lest you would shortly know it better. When would you be off, sergeant?"

"At once, if it please you," said I. "My nags are even now in waiting at Master Dale's." Whereupon he expressed his readiness to depart that very minute, his own horse being stabled at Master Dale's, after having been ridden in from Gloucester that same morning.

But if, on arrival at the stables, I had before been astonished at the unwillingness and obstinacy displayed by the proprietor, I was now no less amazed at his generous spirit, and the care-

fulness for every detail that shone resplendent in his equipment of the horses. Holding my stirrup whilst I mounted, he said: "You will find your haversacks fairly supplied, gentlemen, for you have but a barren country to traverse in these days."

Thanking him heartily for his considerateness, we walked our horses down the lane into the highway, and then set off at a hand-gallop, Clarke leading the way. The full moon was just climbing above the tops of the trees in our rear as we left Jamestown and turned into a bridle-path winding through the forest close by the river. Long ere this the good town was asleep, the night being still to holiness; there being naught to break the silence as our horses stepped in Indian file along the mossy swang. Only when the path wound backwards for a space from the river deep into the forest, would we catch at intervals the wild cry of a panther abroad on a midnight prowl, with other strange sounds of the midnight life of the forest.

Yet I loved the silence at this hour, I remember, my mind being intent upon the import of my present mission. For of Master Bacon I had heard divers reports bruited round Jamestown. All agreeing, however, as to his being a man of parts and holding a position of great cogency in the favour of all true Virginians. As for his antecedents, I had learned that he was a gentleman by right of birth and

education, his father being Master Thomas Bacon of Fristan Hall, a gentleman of known loyalty and a stanch supporter of his king all through his troublous days preceding the Commonwealth.

Proceeding to his degree at Cambridge, Master Bacon thereupon delved sedulously for a space at the Inns of Court; and it was by virtue of the wisdom he there stored up, I doubt not, that he had now come to look scornfully askant at the judicial sophistries perpetrated by his Excellency, Sir William Berkeley, upon a patient and long-suffering populace. Nor such-wise had his education been completed; for, being provided with a generous competency by his father, he had then set forth to see the world by travel and adventure in many foreign lands. And, being a gentleman of fine aspirations, and striving to know his fellow-creature by intimate association and experience of such divers pleasantries of folly and high-living as befitted a young gentleman of his education and resources, he had soon permanently invested his competency and returned to the home of his father.

Wherefore, being anxious to prove the merit of his son's training, his father gave him eighteen thousand pounds and a letter to his cousin, Nathaniel Bacon, senior, who was a rich and politick gentleman high in the Council of Virginia. Accordingly, after marrying his sweet-heart, the daughter of Sir William Duke, young

Master Bacon — for he was barely nine-and-twenty — had come to Virginia ; and, ensconcing himself upon a plantation at Curles, he had risen rapidly from the Assembly to the Council, until now there was none to doubt the vigorous supremacy of his parts, save Sir William Berkeley himself.

Chapter V

The Ride to Curles

WE had skirted the narrow road winding round the governor's plantation at Green Springs shortly past midnight. Thence bearing to the westward, we kept on at a brisk pace until we arrived at the banks of the Chickahominy. Following up the stream awayward before coming to the bridge, Master Clarke warned us that we might here have some difficulty in crossing. For I had fully explained to him the object of my journey; and, knowing that the *Adam and Eve* had gone up the James to Curles, he assumed that the main roads leading out of Jamestown would at least be guarded in order to prevent the passing of any courier. But his Excellency, seemingly, had no suspicion of any scheme being afoot to thwart his plans; for, finding the bridge clear, we passed on over the Chickahominy, and, going ahead at a steady canter, had arrived by daybreak in the settlement of Wyanoke.

Here we dismounted beside the river to water our horses, and take a bite of food ourselves. Then, taking a hitch to our saddle girths, we

were about to mount and be off, when we observed a strange party a short distance ahead of us walking streamward. There were four men, I saw, and they were leading a woman or a girl between them, who hung back as though in great reluctance.

"Here's a sight for you, sergeant," said Master Clarke. "Do you see that plank, with the chair on the end of it, swung out over the river?"

Looking in the direction he pointed, I answered directly, "Surely, Master Clarke."

"Well, sir," said he, "belike you know those are the devil's balances, and I misdoubt not that they are about to weigh yon hapless baggage."

"Weigh her?" said I, as I saw them attempting to place the struggling lithesome wench in the chair. "What mean you, Master Clarke? — or stay! let us join them."

"Why, sir," quoth Master Clarke as we quickly mounted, "what I mean is that, if she sinks, she is sound and the Lord has her; but peradventure, sir, she is light weight, — then the devil has her."

"My faith, sir, 'tis a queerish test," I laughed, "and of a fine subtilty."

"And the maids like it, sir," he added, "as a cat likes water."

By this time we were up with them. The girl, I saw, — when her struggling ceased long

enough for me to catch a fair look, — could not have been past eighteen years, and though her cheeks were deeply flushed with her efforts, it but added to the wildsome beauty of her face with its dark hair and flashing eyes. The men had not yet succeeded in fastening her in the chair ; and, seeing us come up, her eyes changed swiftly from anger to pleading as they sought me out where I sat in mute wonderment astride my nag.

“ Oh, sir ! ” she cried, “ free me from these godly fools, I prythee. I swear to you that I have done no wrong ! ”

And if at first I tried not to hearken, whilst she again began struggling as they now thought to take advantage of her, it was only because I do ever try to mind my own affairs. But zounds ! how could any man sit by and see these things, save, mayhap, he had been bred to them ? So that, seeing one great knave with peaked bonnet, who appeared to be their leader, lay his rough hands upon the girl’s soft shoulders and press her downwards upon the chair, whether the cry she uttered came from pain or dissembling mattered naught at that time.

“ Tut tut, you rascal ! ” I cried out sharply ; “ what has the girl done to you ? ”

“ Done, sir ? ” he demanded in fierce surprise at my interference. “ Nay, she has done naught, but methinks she is a witch.”

“Then stand aside!” said I, springing from my seat. “Have done with your ‘methinks,’ you rogue, or try it on yourselves!” And drawing my sword, I quickly cut the thongs that bound her, with scant heed to the angry muttering of the men. For like all knaves of this saintly kidney, who do the devil’s work mistaking that it is the Lord’s, there was no fight in them. And though they kept looking backwards at the girl whilst they walked off, as though they would fain find her out and prove their doubts upon her at some later day when under no restraint, we waited a moment with her till they had gone a goodly piece. Looking up suddenly, however, I caught Master Clarke smiling slyly at Master Henry, and, seeing that I had noted his look and thereat frowned slightly, he said soberly, —

“Well, well, sergeant, the prize is yours. But take my advice, sir, and weigh her well ere you take her.”

“Nay,” I answered, albeit in some constraint, I remember, “I doubt not the lass loves freedom best.”

“By my faith, sir!” she answered, with a smile that just revealed for an instant a flash of pearly teeth, “as I’m a gypsy, you speak true!” Then seizing my hand swiftly, she continued in a spirited voice: “Look you, Master Vivian,” — though how she knew my name I know not, for it had not been spoken, — “you have done

me a favour. But now I prythee listen, sir : When the October crescent seeks rest in the westward forest — ”

“ Alas ! ” I cried, amidst the laughter of my men, “ spare me, spare me, my pretty ! ” And I held my gauntlet before her lips to check her speech, albeit the next moment I regretted that I had not effected this result after a pleasanter fashion.

Yet such regrets were brief ; for, standing not one whit abashed, — the little hussy ! — she cried : “ What, sir ; you won’t hearken ? Then take that ! ” And ere I could divine her intent, she had kissed me soundly on the cheek and ran off laughing down the marge a piece into the woods.

So for a space, whilst I mounted and rode on, my companions affected to be so mightily amused that I presently strove to turn their thoughts upon the serious import of our journey by pushing rapidly onwards, and speaking of the events that had recently been crowding thick and fast upon the colony. Being an old Indian campaigner, Master Clarke recited to me how the present troubles had begun. A party of Indians, he stated, of the tribe of Does, had killed a herdsman. These were pursued and killed — together with a number of Susquehannocks, who were keeping ill company — by a party of militia. Whereupon the tribes became alarmed and sought refuge in a

fort near the head of the Potomac, where they were besieged by Colonel John Washington.

"That was a year ago, Master Vivian," continued Clarke. "Many of our men who chanced near the fort were killed; and so it was that, having starved them to it, when six of their chiefs came out in a parley, our men broke all restraint and shot them down. That same night the Indians evacuated the fort, and skulking off by moonlight, killed ten of the militia. Then, going on to the head waters of the James and Potomac, men, women, and children were horribly butchered—sixty persons, all told, sir, paying forfeit with their lives for those of the six chiefs.

"But I fear me, sir," he concluded, "that tales such as these bear scant vitality to a man fresh from home. One must serve in an Indian campaign or two ere he comes to know these fiends at their devil's worth. Then you would learn, sir, some idea of the dangers the settlers have risked ever since the time of first landing in Virginia."

Waiting for a space, he continued: "I well remember my first campaign, sir, some fifteen years ago, when I was a mere child. At that time the Indians had broken out and the people had fled to convenient forts for shelter. My father's plantation being scarce a mile from the fort, my brother and I were wont to return there every morning and again at nightfall to

feed the cattle. Naught having been seen of a savage for a week past, it so happened that we returned early in the afternoon one day, and were engaged in clearing and preparing a small patch for watermelons. But do you believe in dreams, sir?"

"Perchance," I answered, startled at the way he had broken off; "leastwise they have a strange significancy at times."

"By heavens, sir, that they do!" he exclaimed. "For barely had we left the fort that afternoon, when my father, falling into a sound sleep, dreamt that he saw his two children walking scalped about the fort yard. So impressed was he with this that he awoke with a startled cry, and, learning that we had gone to the plantation, set off after us at once. Coming to an eminence, he at first saw us working there quietly about the place; but as he came on near us, he saw two Indians run out of the house and make for us. Our backs being towards them, however, we saw only our parent as he came hurrying on and commanded that we run at once straight back to the fort.

"At this the Indians set up a yell, whilst he braved them alone, running from tree to tree. Finding himself at last behind a sugar-maple that left part of his body exposed, he quitted it swiftly for a large oak, whilst one of the savages dodged quickly behind the maple. Yet the savage found the same fault with this tree

as did my parent, and conscious that it would not shelter him, he threw himself down beside a log. Here, likewise, part of his body lay exposed; but ere he could turn again, my father had put a bullet in him, so that the savage, finding himself wounded, at once stabbed himself according to their habit.

“But a fight with Indians is a fight to the death, Master Vivian,” he continued; “my parent’s gun now being of no avail, he managed to draw the fire of the second savage, and then advanced boldly to meet him without a weapon save his clubbed musket. This the savage promptly knocked out of his hands with his tomahawk, and they closed. But, notwithstanding his age, sir, my parent was a lithe wrestler and had soon thrown the Indian. But like a snake the savage crawled from under him and got atop; then giving a horrific yell, as is their wont when assured of victory, he reached for his knife. But here it was that my mother’s apron, which the rascal had adorned himself with when in the house, came into good play by preventing him from easily drawing it. So that, whilst he was feeling for his knife, my father managed to get one of his fingers in his mouth, and grinding it between his teeth he fairly disconcerted him for a space and caused him to howl with pain. Not for long, however; for at length the Indian got hold of his knife, but with his grasp so far up on the

blade that my parent likewise caught hold of the end of the handle. Then, diverting his enemy's mind for a space by again grinding his finger sharply, he pulled suddenly at the handle and drew the blade clean through the savage's fist."

"The devil!" I cried, my excitement wrought to a pitch. "A fine tale; proceed!" *

"Both sprang to their feet, sir, yet my parent never once let go of the rascal's finger with his teeth till he gave him a fatal stab. Then, running after us, he hurried us away to the fort, and returned directly with a party of men to learn if other Indians were prowling round. But there was none; and, following a trail of blood to beneath the branches of a fallen tree, they were accosted by the man with whom my father had just done battle.

"'How do, broder; how do!' he cried out on being discovered. 'Me good Injun, how do!'

"But I fear me, sir," Clarke concluded, "that they well assured themselves of this; for" — drawing a tobacco-pouch from his doublet, and loading his pipe — "this is a piece of the hide

* NOTE BY THE EDITOR. — Should any one but myself ever chance to become interested in these memoirs, it may please them to know that these Indian tales which Master Vivian has herein recorded for the first time are true to the very letter; being long afterwards, in company with numerous others, collected into a volume known as *Witber's Chronicles of Border Warfare*, published in Clarkesburg, Va., early in the present century, but now long out of print. — H. F.

of him who, but for my parent's dream, would have prevented me from ever telling the tale."

Coming to a turn in the road where the river made a sharp curve, we again galloped for a piece close to the river's marge. We had not proceeded more than a mile farther ere we passed a large ship that we knew to be the *Adam and Eve*. She was standing up the river, with a light breeze that scarce permitted her to keep pace with the stream's current. And, the hour being then a little past nine, Master Clarke conjectured that it would be late in the afternoon before ever she would arrive at Curles.

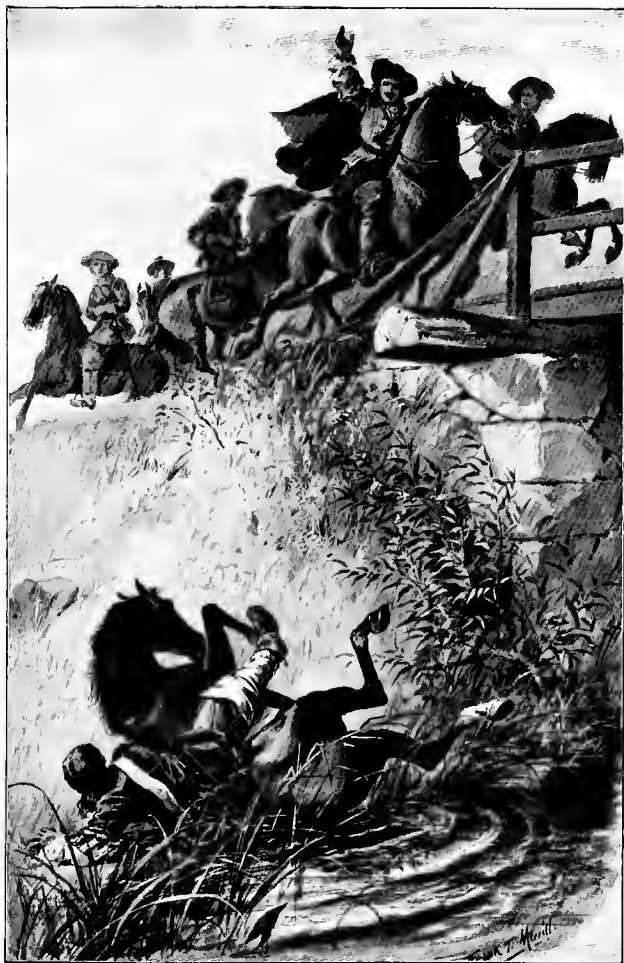
About a mile beyond here, a little stream empties into the James, making a wide and marshy indentation into the adjacent country, the road becoming treacherous and somewhat heavy under foot. Yet we could see that it had been built up, by means of logs and sod, to a height of several feet above the swamp. This elevation kept increasing as we went on nearing the mouth of the stream. Here again the road takes a sharp turn; and, coming out from our concealment behind the willows that fringed it closely on either side, we found ourselves directly within a hundred paces of the bridge. But to my infinite dismay, I remember, we discerned at the same time a number of horsemen riding their nags slowly up and down as though guarding the approach.

We were discovered by them at the same time ; although they made so little ado on our appearance, continuing to sit their horses in a defenceless indifference, — due, no doubt, to their numbering nearly two to our one, — that I at first misdoubted my own surmise of their being placed there by his Excellency to prevent a passage. However, I preferred to take no chances after travelling safely all this distance. So, telling my men to press close to me on either side but slightly in the rear, and to fight shy with their swords if spurs alone would avail, we went ahead at a brisk gallop.

All this time the road-bed continued to rise, so that as we neared the approach of the bridge, it stood, I should judge, fully ten feet above the marsh, and to which it fell away sheer into a dense growth of flags on either side. As we drew nigh, one of their men — who appeared to be their captain — rode forward and saluted me with his sword, so that perforce I drew rein slightly whilst returning it.

“It is the governor’s wish, sir,” said he, “that no one shall pass this bridge until further notice. We are sorry, gentlemen,” he added, bowing suavely, “to put you to any inconvenience ; still, such is his Excellency’s command.”

“Yes,” I replied, after his own manner, but never drawing rein, “we, too, are pained to ride contrary to his Excellency’s pleasure ; but,”



“He fell in a struggling, swearing heap.” — Page 87.

I continued, gathering my nag well in hand and spurring suddenly forward, "we have urgent business beyond and little time for jesting."

With this we were instantly in their midst before they had time to prepare. All save their captain, whom I had engaged sharply, and found but slight difficulty in keeping at my sword's point,—for I had no intent to stain it at such a moment,—whilst gradually forcing nearer and nearer to the bridge. But by this time their men had had time to rally; one of them coming close up to me and, with an oath, levelling his pistol full in my face, just as Master Henry struck up his arm and caused the ball to sing harmlessly over my head.

I now realized the expediency of our formation; my men being compact and in the centre of the narrow road, whilst our opponents were scattered and on the verge of tumbling over the banks. So, striking my spur suddenly into the shoulder of the captain's horse, I caused him to rear high in the air; then, spurring suddenly forward, with Master Clarke close behind and almost beneath the captain, both horse and rider were quickly crowded over the embankment.

And whilst he fell in a struggling, swearing heap in the marsh below, we gave a shout and a laugh, and went through the balance with a rush and a sharp clatter of hoofs that rang and

echoed away behind us, as our horses' feet struck firm on the planks of the bridge. A few shots whizzed after us, it is true, in lively accompaniment, but hastily aimed; and, as I turned in my saddle and looked backward a moment, I saw that the knaves were more concerned in looking after their discomfited leader than in watching the heels of three as discourteous rogues as ever set the governor's will at defiance.

"Egad!" cried Master Clarke as we flew on, "that pleases me well, my friend; for 'tis precious few skirmishes we see here in the open."

"Yet you may see more, I opine," said I, "if rumour be true."

"Belike," he answered; "yet 'twill be only at his Excellency's desire, the same as the one just past."

"Too much meddling, I presume, Master Clarke," I answered, as we dropped presently into a slower pace, "with the free rights of a free people."

"Aye, sir, that is all," he admitted. "And see what he intends doing at this moment, by arresting Master Bacon ere the feeling of the people has recovered from that last massacre! At that time, sir, Master Bacon had sworn that if a redskin harmed any of his household he meant to avenge himself whether the governor willed or no. A few days later, during his absence from home, the fiends swooped down

upon his plantation and murdered his overseer, to whom he was greatly attached. Upon his return the day after, the settlers to the number of three hundred gathered at his house and begged him to lead them into the wilderness against the Indians."

"But you know, Master Vivian," continued Clarke, "of the fine trade the governor profits himself to with the Indians. Why, by heaven, sir! he has come to care more for the preservation of the savages than of the settlers. And you heard Master Drummond declare, no doubt, that 'no bullets can pierce beaver-skins.' And it is a fact; for, having issued his proclamation that no one was to do battle against the savages without his permission, however grave the circumstance, these settlers—many of whom had lost their wives and children but a few hours before—waited there at Master Bacon's till they could send a courier to his Excellency granting them a commission to defend themselves."

"Monstrous!" I exclaimed in great amazement. "And did they wait?"

"Aye, sir, that they did," he replied, "for several days, whilst all this time the savages continued their devil's campaign of murder along the frontier. And the settlers kept coming into Curles by the score, bringing fresh accounts of the most barbarous deeds ever committed. Yet still they waited, nor heard

ought from his Excellency. Seeing now that their lives were of but scant concern to the governor, and yielding to the clamour of the settlers, Master Bacon finally despatched a missive to his Excellency thanking him for the commission that was momentarily expected but had not yet arrived, and — egad, sir! what a speech he made! followed with a cheer that rang and echoed away into the forest, whereupon we took up our musketoons and set out.”

Now this tale was fresh to me at the time, I remember, yet it gathered and broke on my mind as Clarke came to a pause, with all the ominous significance of fate that there was no evading, — nay, that none would evade if he could. And as I bethought myself how that it was for a deed like the one just related that Master Bacon was now in risk of being arrested as a rebel, I felt that it quickened the intent I had already made to act with the Virginians. Nor yet, God knows, as a mere adventurer, but as one who would bravely bare the arm and fight with all the strength that Heaven has blessed him, for the freedom of a land that he shall some day proudly call his own.

We continued on at a goodly pace through the fertile country lying round Westover and Berkeley, though the lands were mostly lying fallow in the bright June sun that should have been rearing splendid crops of maize and tobacco. Away to our right, the stately forest

of oak and pine swept by mile after mile; whilst near by at our left flowed the tawny and tranquil James, an ever-open and ever-available source of transportation and communication. Numbers of strange birds scurried across our path at our sudden approach, whilst in the trees and shrubbery were others of brilliant plumage and some of a wildsome pretty song.

It was long past midday ere we arrived at Shirley; but, though our horses showed unmistakable signs of fatigue, we stopped only long enough to drink them in front of a friendly ordinary, where the host came out and spoke pleasantly a moment to Master Clarke, whom he knew. Then again we were off; travelling now due northwards and following the turn in the river as it winds from Shirley to Curles. A dozen miles more, belike, if I rightly remember, and we had sighted the buildings of the Bacon plantation.

Chapter VI

Of the Doings of the *Adam and Eve*

THE Curles plantation was at that day one of the noblest in all Virginia, being in due accord with the wealth and prospects of its proprietor, Master Nathaniel Bacon, junior. Yet at this time I paid little heed to the surroundings; save to note, as we turned in, that a wide, gravelly drive wound from the highway back to the house, which latter was built of brick, two stories in height, with a wing adjoining the west exposure that was completely massed in ivy. Breasting an eminence as we approached the buildings, we now caught a glimpse of the James, being able to outline its course for some distance whilst it wound—dotted here and there with small sailing craft—in and out between the far green hills.

Reining up at the side portico, a few servants cautiously stuck their heads out of the out-house windows and began whispering together mysteriously when I inquired for Master Bacon. One of them, an elderly darky with a fleece of snowy wool atop his wrinkled, weather-beaten face, finally came out and, with much quaint

fearsomeness in his tones, advised me that his master was not at home.

"So much the better, then," I assured him, in delight that there was now little likelihood of his being arrested. "But do you go tell your mistress that a messenger from Jamestown would be pleased to speak with her a moment."

So saying, I dismounted, followed by my men, and was about loosening the girth of my saddle, when, chancing to look up, I saw that the servant had not budged from his tracks. Whereupon I warned him sharply:—

"Come, come, gather your wits there! If you be a good servant of your mistress step lively and have no fear."

At this he moved off. Then, after we had waited a few moments, he returned, saying that his mistress would be at the door directly.

"Well, sir, what would you with me?" a voice called out as the door opened and a woman stood forth on the portico. A beautiful, queenly, golden-haired woman she was, too; though her face was a trifle too pale mayhap at that moment, due, no doubt, to surprise or concern for her husband.

Bowing low, my feather sweeping the ground, I answered: "I bear a message for you, madame, from Mistress Langdon."

"What!" she exclaimed with a start; "from Mistress Langdon?"

"Yes, madame," I assured her, bowing

again, but with a halt in my speech at the cold look that came over her face. "This is passing strange," she said, as though speaking more to herself. "But let me hear what word you bring, sir."

Greatly awed at the haughty way she commanded, I repeated the message as it had been given me by Mistress Langdon. For a moment she paled slightly; then, looking down at me scornfully, whilst the colour flamed fiercely into her cheeks, with felling fervency she cried out:—

"You knave! you contemptible hireling! How dare you fetch me such a tale? Oh, that my husband were here to reward you, sir!" and to the negro holding my bridle: "'Lijah, face his nag towards the gate!"

Whereat I felt my head swim wildly and my wits grow dim in sudden astoundment. After the journey I had come over the long fifty miles almost without a pause and in the face of all hazard of arrest or impediment at the hands of the governor,—the disappointment, the chagrin, yea, even a little anger that I felt at this undeserved humiliation at her hands, and before the eyes of my men, did so unnerve me that I can scarce speak of it to this day without a flush of the face at the unpleasant remembrance of it all. Nor can I yet say how long I continued to stand there like a fool, saying naught in my own defence whilst my eyes grew fastened to the toes of my

boots; and though it could not have been more than a moment at worst, yet was I conscious through it all of the sniggering of the coloured servants as they gathered round and exchanged glances filled with delight and approval of their mistress; whilst as I looked up I remember noting a swift glance of wonder and confusion passing betwixt my two men.

Yet it was only for a moment — a plague on the tale! have I not already said so? — ere I bethought myself of what Mistress Langdon had warned me: that the Bacon family was sore beset and perforce suspicious of all strange comers through fear of such being instruments of the governor's revenge. Therefore, drawing the ring from my finger that she had in sheer mischief placed there, I passed it to Mistress Bacon, saying, —

“This, madame, may satisfy you whence I come, and that I am no impostor.”

“My God, sir!” she cried, recognizing it at a glance, “if your message be indeed the true one, — and I can no longer doubt it, — then am I undone!”

“How so?” I asked quickly, viewing her distress with alarm. “Master Bacon, you say, is not at home?”

“Nay, nay, — would that he were, sir!” she answered hotly. “For we have been duped; some one has played us false! Scant two hours past a knave, accompanied like yourself by two

riders, called here and delivered a message to me from Mistress Langdon, saying: 'A troop of horse leaves Jamestown to-night for Curles, purposing to arrest your husband. Have him escape in his sloop while there is yet time.'"

"And your husband—was he at home?" I asked.

"Aye, there is the pity of it, sir," she answered impatiently. "For, though he strangely misdoubted the men, he yielded to my entreaties; and the men, leaving their horses here, embarked with him on board the sloop and sailed off down the river."

"Alas, madame!" I exclaimed, with all my former anger at her melted to pity at this sorry plight. "It is indeed a trick; but do you describe to me as briefly as possible the leader of those men."

And with that and a thousand pardons in her face for her misdoubt of me she went on to tell of the knave, — the cut of his face, the style of his wear, and the manner of his speech, the while I listened in growing anger and amazement as she confirmed my every suspicion. And, whilst she proceeded, I saw that I had been completely thwarted and outwitted by a man who had dogged my footsteps and played the spy upon me — listening, no doubt, to every word let fall that he could turn to his own advantage — ever since I had been in Jamestown. And that man, I knew, was Seager!

I had only one thought as I sprang hastily into the saddle, telling my men to use their spurs as we rode out of the Bacon plantation and dashed away at a lively gallop. This was to intercept in some manner Master Bacon's sloop ere the *Adam and Eve* should arrive beating up the river against a westerly breeze. I remembered a point in the road between Shirley and Westover where the river approached to within a few feet of the highway, which was there unobstructed by trees or willows. If we could make that position before the ship should arrive, there was yet a chance of hailing those on board the sloop as it came down the stream; warning Master Bacon and squaring accounts with Seager at the same time.

I now comprehended the cause of the fellow's appearance on the morning of the day before, when he had stepped out from the thicket into the lane near the spot where I had first met Mistress Langdon. Nor did I forget the fine humour that he was in, and his graciousness at swallowing the words I threw him — with a guinea besides — when telling me that he had been robbed. Robbed! you sly dog; forsooth, when a thief shall cry out to an honest man he is robbed, then shall the honest man fain hand him his own purse. And again I recalled that sudden snap of a twig that had so startled Mistress Langdon the night before. Her ears, in sooth, were sharper than mine, and the idle

fears she cried out against not wholly without desert. How much he had heard, whose revelation to the governor would be liable to cause her annoyance, I could not in sooth know, yet suffered no little anxiety at the thought.

This, however, was naught to the way I cursed my own simplicity in so trusting the knave. For, knowing him in the past, I had such wise given him an opportunity now, besides making a fool of myself, of jeopardizing the life of Master Bacon and the cause for which many brave and loyal hearts were struggling. For I well knew the temper of Sir William Berkeley. In his egotistic way he considered Master Bacon to be a man but popularly inclined—a demagogue, methinks, was the word his royal lips applied, with that fatuous humour that railed at books and printing, and issued proclamations on the security of the savages and settlers whilst snugly ensconced in his own study. Yet Sir William Berkeley was no coward, albeit he had scant inclination to go out into the forest and fight savages when he could the better pander to his tastes—and to his exchequer—by staying at home and maintaining the semblance of a trade with such of the tribes as were still friendly. So, whilst this tragedy was going on outside of the mansion, it did greatly delight his Excellency to be scribbling plays and more immortal tragedies, mayhap, such as “The

Lost Lady"; the which I remember being played in London to the great amusement of the court.

Filled with anxiety as to the outcome of the day's adventure, we forced our poor nags ahead as fast as spur could impel. But they were fagged out with the long distance they had come without food or rest, so that after traversing the first half-dozen miles it was impossible to keep them moving faster than a slow canter; and by the time we reached Shirley we were forced to pull up at the ordinary where we had paused on the way to Curles.

"Master Wilkins!" cried out Clarke as we drew rein. And as the landlord appeared in the doorway,—a quick, dapper, little fellow with a patriotic heart too big for his body,—Clarke continued: "Master Bacon has been arrested!"

"What's that, sir?" cried mine host in quick excitement.

"He is arrested, I say — Master Bacon!" repeated Clarke firmly.

"Impossible, Master Clarke!" blustered the little man as he hastened towards us; "why, there's no man living could arrest Nathaniel Bacon at his own home!"

"But the deed's done, Master Wilkins," Clarke urged, "unless we can ride ahead and overtake his captors."

"Good heavens! then why do you wait

here, sir?" he asked, standing first on one foot and then on the other as his impatience increased.

"And where are your eyes, landlord?" retorted Clarke, pointing to where our horses stood flecked with foam and frothing at the bit. "Can't you see they are well-nigh foundered?" and seeing that he and Clarke were two of a tale and galloping backward at that, I added my voice with the request that he fetch me a nag at once.

"God-'a-mercy, sir!" he stammered, colouring confusedly. "Yes, yes; what an ass I am, sir—I mean that you are, sir! No; yes. Tom! here, Tom!" he continued, crying out to the stable boy. "Fetch up three gentlemen for these horses fresh from the stable, boy, to arrest Master Bacon. Come, step lively!"

"Nay, Master Host," I interfered hastily, though scarce refraining from a laugh at the confusion of the man's loyal tongue; "one horse will do the business if perchance you have a runner."

"The best in Virginia, sir. Tom, bring up the filly!" And for some reason he failed to confuse the filly with the three gentlemen he had just ordered fetched, and who, because of this, could now remain, belike, resting quietly in their stalls.

To change the saddle from the back of the

gray and on to the filly, was only the work of a moment. Then, telling my men to await me there, but to return to Jamestown in the morning should I fail to return, I sprang into the saddle and was off like the wind.

For Master Wilkins was as good as his word; having mounted me on a spirited nag whose little feet seemed scarcely to touch the earth, so quick was her step and light the rebound as the ground flew away beneath us. At any time other than this it was a ride that would have filled me with delight. But now I was oppressed with gloomy forebodings and a sense of defeat that even the rapid and rhythmic swing of our flight could not dispel, there being, I feared me, scarce one chance out of ten of my being able to reach the spot on time, ere the sloop should run up squarely against the *Adam and Eve*.

Reaching at last the jutting point in the road, I saw already, ere I had dismounted, the white sails of a large ship standing up the stream. She was scarcely a half-mile distant, but the hull I could not even yet discern on account of its being hidden by the dense growth of willows alongshore. However, there was still the curve in the river beyond that she must round ere reaching the point where I stood. Hastily dismounting, therefore, I tethered the filly to a sapling close by; then turning, and sweeping my eye rapidly over the river, I discerned a

sloop running swiftly before the wind, now nearly opposite me, but well over towards the southward shore.

This, I had no doubt, was the sloop of Master Bacon; and with a warning shout, I quickly unfastened my cloak from the saddle and waved it about my head. Then again, and again, I halloed; but to no purpose save affrighting the filly half out of her wits and without attracting the slightest notice on board the sloop. Whereat I was in despair, fearing the sloop would shortly pass me; when I suddenly espied a small skiff tied to the willows a hundred yards below.

Then with a mad cry of "Whoa, there!" to my crazy nag, but never ceasing to wave my cloak over my head whilst running down to the boat, I quickly sprang in, and, cutting the painter adrift, pushed off into the stream. A leaky, cumbersome craft it was, without oars, save for a paddle whittled out of a rough board lying athwart the seats. With this I made my way as best I could. But as I stood up in the boat my feet were already in water ankle-deep, and I could see that it was rising every moment nearer and nearer to the level of the seats. Ere this befell me, however, I was out some three hundred yards from shore. Then, standing on one of the seats, I raised my cloak aloft on the point of my sword and waved it violently to and fro.

Once, twice, thrice it circled, full and flapping and free above my head; and then I swore. For the treacherous breeze that pays scant heed to the cause of rebel or tyrant, martyr or knave, had caught it full in the belly; and, though I made a wild thrust after it into the empty air and well-nigh lost my balance, it sailed high over my head and presently dropped, like some great bird of ill-omen, full fifty yards below me into the stream.

That I must have appeared a woful and alien apparition rising up suddenly out of the middle of the *James*, standing up above the gunwale of a rickety and rotten old hulk half filled with water and ready at any moment to sink to the bottom, my sword in the air and my cloak suddenly wafted beyond my reach, — a picture at once of a gentleman gone suddenly out of his wits, or of a knight run amuck, I can readily opine. And that I must likewise have afforded fulsome measure for the boisterous guffaws of Seager and the merriment of his companions on board the sloop, I can have no reason to doubt, — despite the protestations of Master Bacon to the contrary afterwards.

Be that as it may, however, my signal had been seen and the sloop had slowly put about with her nose up into the wind. Her sails had even begun filling for a tack towards me, when a bright flash to my left and a little down stream, followed by a sudden report and the quick

plash of a ball falling into the water directly in front of the sloop's bows, caused her to again come up into the wind. Turning my head quickly, I saw that the ship—which I had lost sight of for a space whilst attempting to attract the attention of the sloop—had come up and was bearing swiftly down upon her.

It was now evident that there was no further chance for escape; the ship being so near that I could plainly read the name, *Adam and Eve*, on her bows. Ere the sloop's sails had again filled, the ship was abreast of her; whilst a boat was quickly lowered from her side, and manned by a uniformed crew, started swiftly in pursuit of the sloop.

Seeing that I could now do nothing more, therefore, I paddled down to where my cloak lay spread out on the surface of the water; and, by dint of skilful balancing, effected to fish it out with the point of my sword without upsetting the boat. Whereupon I turned about and made for the shore as speedily as possible. But the water was rising with every minute higher and higher above the seats; so that by the time I had arrived within a half-dozen yards from the shore, I felt the crazy old craft slowly settling beneath me, and then rapidly sink to the bottom, leaving me standing there in the stream, shoulder-deep amidst the rushes.

Whereat for a space, methinks, and ere my feet had found bottom, I had realized to the

full how Jonah felt to be swallowed; nor could I find words for the nonce that were in any sense adequate to the occasion. But as with infinite stress I waded ashore through the slimy water, pulling one foot out of the oozy muck only to sink it anew whilst lifting its fellow, it was as though each step of the way were a curse that had shamed the devil. Zounds! that rascally Seager would yet feel the prick of my point for his share in my undoing. And, whilst I thought of him, in my rising wrath the governor and all his train-bands did pale into such utter insignificancy that naught should avail in the rascal's protection when my time should come in good earnest!

Scrambling up the bank on to firm ground, and seating myself on a rock whilst I drew off my heavy boots and poured the water out of them, I again turned to look at the vessels lying opposite. The long-boat was now returning in the direction of the *Adam and Eve*, being heavily loaded with men crowded together and standing up in the stern-sheets, where I thought I recognized Seager. But there was no confusion or disorder such as I apprehended would attend on Master Bacon's arrest. On the contrary, he had evidently concluded to quit playing a game of hide-and-seek with the governor, whilst matters would now be forced squarely to an issue. Reaching the ship, therefore, the passengers were hastily disembarked; then, with

her great sails spread before the wind, she moved silently off down the river, followed by the sloop that was now manned by a uniformed crew.

By this time the sun was setting with a vivid glow in the tops of the dense forest away to the westward; a sudden flare of coloured lights shooting ever and anon high up into the zenith like arrows, and reflected in the dark mirror of the James as it glided on beside the wooded shores. Above and around a deep silence filled all space, holding it as though in thrall; save for a sudden whirr of wings sounding its note of alarm, as a flock of wild-fowl took flight when I half turned round. Whilst to my right the mournful plaint of a turtle-dove amidst the pines again broke the stillness for a moment, as I stood there watching the boats round the curve in the river below and pass on out of sight.

Returning to where I had tethered the filly, I found her pawing the earth impatient to be off; the bridle already slipped over one ear, and the knot by which I had tied her half undone. It needed but her escape, methought, smiling grimly whilst I readjusted the harness, to have fittingly crowned the day's adventures, leaving me to make the best of my way back to Shirley afoot in my drowned garments. Howbeit, it was long past dark ere I reached there; and the clatter of the filly's hoofs being

recognized by the stable boy, I handed the bridle to him as I dismounted wearily and passed on into the ordinary.

A great fire of logs was roaring forth a cheerful welcome when I entered the room; whilst circled round it were an indefinite number of coloured servants, all lying at full length, some with their black heels and others with their woolly heads poked almost into the flames. Seeing me enter, Master Wilkins cried out for them to begone and make way for me round the fire; and in the same breath asked eagerly after news of Master Bacon. Such was briefly told, however; and after a light supper I was fain to take myself off to bed after one of the most disastrous days withal in all my experience, the unpleasant events of which still prick me mightily to record.

Yet I was up betimes the following morning. My garments having been taken by a servant and spread before the fire, I now found them placed before me warm and dry; so that, being again comfortably attired, I was in tolerably good spirits when I entered the room where my men sat waiting me with the host. Then, after a hearty breakfast, and with our host accompanying us with a mind made up to see justice done to Master Bacon, we mounted and set off to Jamestown.

Our horses likewise being in trim condition, showing no signs of the hard ride we had

given them the day before, after the first few miles were past we pressed forward at a stiff gait. Yet all the way along we were joined by little parties coming from divers directions, all bent on the same intent of rallying to the support of Master Bacon, whose arrest was now known. Stern-faced and grave they were; speaking little, but that to the point. And, as their numbers kept increasing, by the time we had arrived at Master Lawrence's that evening we numbered several score.

Here I bade farewell to Master Clarke, who would accept no pay for attending me; and, with his horse in lead, I continued on to the stables.

Chapter VII

A Governor by Divine Right

AS I rode up to Master Dale's stables that evening, I noticed that the yard was dotted here and there with little groups of men speaking in low tones. Now and then some voice more clamorous than the others raising its tones in eager excitement, but shortly subsiding again into the general murmur. Several men passed me a-foot going townward; having safely stabled their horses, I inferred, and now seeking out some ordinary where they could give vent to their pent feelings in discussion with their countrymen and lie the night.

"A stiff ride, Master Dale," I cried, drawing rein beside the open doorway, as he came forward to meet me. "Yet I trust, sir, you will find your horses none the worse for it."

"Never mind the nags, Master Vivian," he answered coldly. "But be so good as to explain your late return and the arrest of Master Bacon."

"Why, damn it, man!" I replied hotly, the memory of my awkward discomfiture being revived by the unfriendly misdoubt in his manner, "I was too late; that is all!"

"How so?" he asked angrily. "Were the nags not in condition to carry you, sir?"

"Yes, yes," I answered; "but some rascally spy, whom I would I could lay my hands on, had a full two hours' start of me." And with this I proceeded to tell him of my defeat, but making no mention of the name of Seager—that being my own affair.

He heard me out, and his manner became more hospitable as he remarked, grimly: "Mayhap they have outwitted us this time, sir. But let them look sharp, and take heed that they do no harm to Master Bacon. For the people are in no mood to be tricked again by his Excellency, Master Vivian."

"Nor will they be, sir," I assured him, "if the massing of the people counts for aught. But has the *Adam and Eve* arrived?"

"Yes," said he; "late this afternoon, with the sloop close behind that was at once known for Master Bacon's. He is to be tried," he added with a hard accent on the word, "tomorrow morning."

Taking my way towards Master Lawrence's, I parted company with Henry in front of his lodgings; and, knowing that the man was short of money, I insisted on paying for his services out of my own purse. This he at first refused to accept, however, but I pressed it upon him, and with a satisfactory sense that it was well applied.

"Count on me always, sir, and on my brother," he assured me, "when in need of a man at your back."

Promising to bear them both in mind, I continued on down the road, where there was a steady clatter of late arrivals. The stalls in the town now being full, men were tethering their nags along the wayside and letting them graze at will. And had not nearly every family in Jamestown at that day gained its livelihood by the keeping of ordinaries—and some, I must confess, at an extraordinary high rate—many would have been forced to lie that night with their nags.

The room was full to overflowing when I entered Lawrence's, so that it was some time ere I was recognized by him in the crowd, where all was confusion and uncertainty. Already my ears heard many and widely varying reports of the events of the previous day now being discussed in different parts of the room. And, as is common at such times, trifles were eagerly seized upon and made mountains of by some narrator of a livelier fancy than his competitors. So that after I had heard all these varying tales, I scarce knew whether to credit that which I had assuredly seen with my own eyes. But this, I have observed, is ever the way with history; and even now when I chance to read at this late day some old wives' tale of the dramatick scenes then being enacted, I scarce

can believe that these memoirs alone are correct and that other recorders have committed some glaring inadvertency.

For myself, I sat at a table drinking a bottle of Master Lawrence's sack, until after the guests had been disposed of and the room cleared for the night. Then, coming over and taking a seat opposite me, Master Lawrence began, —

"You have been away, sergeant, I take it?"

"Yes," I made answer, uncertain at first whether to speak of my trip. But having no desire to publish its futility, I added, "I've been back a piece in the up-country."

"Ah," he said frankly, "you are bound to invest, my friend, regardless of what I have told you."

"Nay, Master Lawrence," I assured him, "I have scant inclination to do so after a sight of the country. I have seen the settlers as well, sir, and I fear me they are in sore stress."

"You noted wisely, my friend; but listen!" he answered earnestly. "To-morrow the first great struggle for liberty in Virginia — or in America — will begin. You know somewhat of its justice, Sergeant Vivian, and are in good season to bear a hand if it so please you."

"And it does, Master Lawrence," I readily assured him. "My choice has been already made, sir, and the little assistance that one man can give, I shall freely give to Virginia."

"Good!" he cried, rising and taking my

hand. "You are the kind we need." Whereupon he went on to speak hastily of such portentous events as I have already recorded. Until, the hour being late, he at length showed me to a pallet in the long hall where several men were already sleeping off the effects of their ride and excitement, and bade me good-night.

I was awakened the following morning by the noise of the people in the adjoining room, for all Jamestown appeared to be aroused at an unwonted hour. Dressing hurriedly, I passed in with the crowd, where men were constantly coming and calling for Master Lawrence, he being a burgess and in great demand at this time.

By nine o'clock there was a line of men extending all the way from the village green to the state house where the trial of Master Bacon was to take place. Having great curiosity to view the outcome of these proceedings, I fell in line with the others and elbowed my way to the door.

The hall itself, I could now see, was of a goodly spaciousness. A lofty arch of polished oaken timbers supported the roof, and on either side were several long, low windows, latticed above and barred with polished oak below. At the farther end of the room was a great stage, with many chairs circled about a long table covered with a dark red cloth.

Two soldiers with drawn swords, attired in

the uniform of his Excellency's guard, stood on either side of the doorway as we filed in; and as we passed on down the aisle towards the stage, I saw others in similar costume stationed here and there about the hall. There was, despite the multitude, however, little noise and no confusion; the men sitting round me having a solemn, determined look on their faces such as forbade trifling converse.

When all were at last seated, the gentlemen composing the Council of Virginia began to file in on the stage. Remaining standing a moment till the last had entered, a hush fell over the room; so that the men might have been walking on tiptoe, or moving, in their habit of black velvet and snowy perukes, more like the figures in a dream. It was a relief when they took their seats, I remember, and the grating of their chairs on the floor broke the stillness that had otherwise grown ominous.

As a body, the Council presented an appearance not inferior to the Parliament of England; the men being for the greater part of a goodly height and of a muscular development, their faces showing the vigour and robustness of much life in the open air. Withal, theirs was a nobleness of presence, methought, such as I had scarce ever seen. Yet still it was not strange that this should be so, nor that some of the first Charles's cavaliers should here be seen, with others claiming descent from some

of the oldest families in England. Many, no doubt, being forced to flee the country on the defeat of their king, and coming to Virginia with their wealth, had acquired vast estates and were again living after the manner of country gentlemen in England. That it was a system his Excellency, Sir William Berkeley, dearly loved, bred as he had been under the first Charles; that it tickled his dignity mightily, and joyed his sense of the *jus divinum*, and mayhap pampered his pride a bit; and that it was a nice state of things that he would strive to maintain until he could no longer draw his sword from its scabbard, or encompass his enemies by all the arts and the tricks of a wily courtier, no reasonable person could doubt.

A troop of soldiery now filed on to the stage in double rank, then separating and forming a line on either side leading to the governor's chair that was placed on a raised platform to the right. A moment's pause, and there passed down the line a gentleman of haughty bearing, attired severely in lustreless black and with scanty ruffs; but in marked contrast to this — as though not quite to conceal his love of display — there were huge silver buckles to his shoes, and his slender white hands were heavily bejewelled. But it was his face that commanded attention. Below the high-arched cheek-bones it grew thin and pointed, the mouth being fine and sensuous, whilst the lips, cruel and thin,

were half concealed beneath the white mustachios. His steel-gray eyes glanced coldly round the assembly-hall, over the Council, burgesses, and freeholders sitting beneath him, saying, in a language that was unmistakable: "Ye gentlemen! ye knaves! ye rascally and rebellious dogs of freeholders! take care; watch out! for his Excellency, Sir William Berkeley, governor of Virginia by divine right, is now amongst ye!"

When the governor had seated himself, two gentlemen of the Council rose, and, stepping over to where he sat, began to address him in a low voice. These men were, my neighbours informed me, Sir Henry Chicheley and Nathaniel Bacon, senior. They spoke rapidly and earnestly for a space, and were obviously interceding for the prisoner. But the governor, paying scant heed to them, waved them off abruptly, crying: "Guards, let the prisoner be fetched before me!"

Four of the guards retiring at the end of the line, they returned directly with a tall, finely proportioned young man, whose features I could not see as he stood facing the governor. But from the low murmur of excitement that swept over the spectators round me, it needed no crier to announce that this was Master Nathaniel Bacon of the Curles plantation.

Glancing him over with his glittering eyes but without rising, the governor said bitterly:

"Behold now the greatest rebel that ever was in Virginia!"

But at this the ill-suppressed excitement round me rose to a low hum, in which a few sharp hisses were distinctly audible, causing the governor to spring quickly to his feet. Standing erect, with his white head thrown back, and one soft hand on which the jewels sparkled held sternly in front of him on a level with his face, he commanded: "Silence, ye knaves! Would ye defeat the ends of justice?"

Turning to Master Bacon once more, he continued: "Sir, do you continue to be a gentleman?"

"Always, your Excellency," replied Master Bacon proudly.

"Then, sir," said the governor, "I may take your word, and you are released on your own parole."

This time a great cheer rose up from the body of the hall, and the name of Sir William Berkeley being shouted out by some lucky-minded knave, there was this time no effort made by the governor to suppress the popular clamour, whilst he stood there taking the cheers as though meant for himself.

So that, whilst the gentlemen of the Council rose to congratulate Master Bacon, the governor continued to stand there with a set smile on his face, bowing his acknowledgments to the applause of the people as they began to file out

of the hall. Then, in his courtliest manner, he turned to the Council, saying, —

“Gentlemen of the Council, and of the House of Burgesses, I would ask the favour of your presence to-night on the occasion of the ball at the mansion. The assembly is now dismissed.”

As I passed out upon the street, I saw at once that this clemency of his Excellency's had been well timed, and had done much to allay the popular uprising in favour of Master Bacon. Already men were preparing to quit Jamestown, returning to their homes in the up-country feeling not one whit less loyal to Master Bacon, but scarce so bitter towards the governor as on the previous night.

Keeping on down the road that morning, I had reached a point nearly opposite the church, when I noticed a group of three men standing together about a hundred paces ahead. They were in the uniform of the guard, and were speaking in low tones when they discovered my approach. Whereupon they ceased speaking, whilst one of them turned away and set off down the path skirting the river. Not, however, before I had time to recognize the knave as being Master Seager, and, quickening my pace, I at once started in pursuit.

The other two eyed me sharply as I came up, and one of them, who carried his arm in a sling, glanced evilly at me a moment and then

looked aside. So that I gave a sudden start of surprise on again seeing my opponent of the bridge whom I had rudely crowded into the marsh a couple of days before. Still I saluted him fairly, giving him a smile as I passed that should have amply assured him, had he been a gentleman, that I was at his service as soon as ever his arm had mended.

But had I been longer in Virginia at that time, I should have hesitated and thought twice before turning into the wooded pathway in pursuit of Seager. For Jamestown in those days was full of a class of reckless adventurers, making it easy of accomplishment for any party to carry out a deed of spite or revenge, and attribute it plausibly to the hands of this slippery class. And even here his Excellency had done more to foster than restrain; many of his guard being as arrant knaves and dissolute courtiers as were ever forced to flee their country, but now fain to gain a subsistence in genteel attendance upon a governor whom they cunningly trusted never to risk their precious lives in fair fight before an enemy.

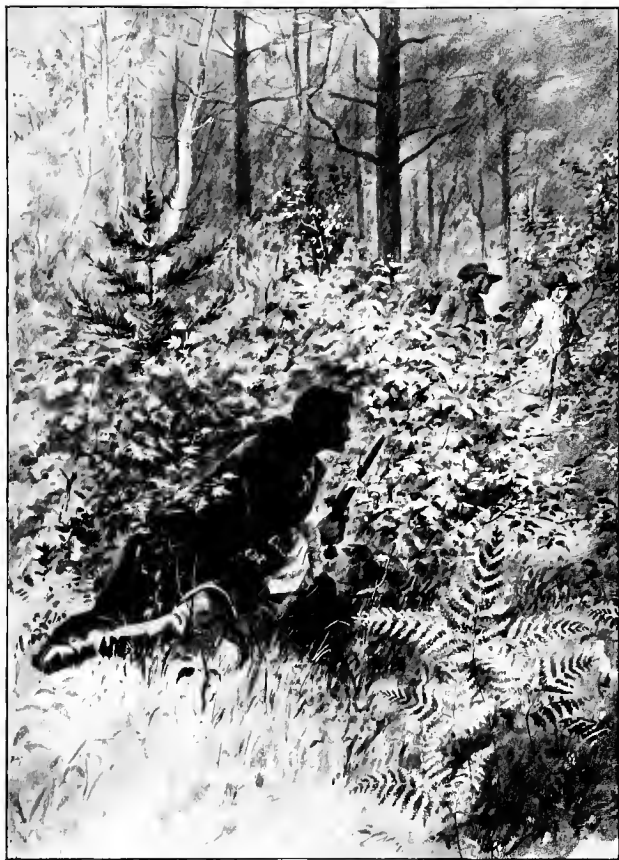
On this occasion, however, I was intent only on speedily overhauling one of them. Hastening along, therefore, and catching a glimpse of Master Seager a short distance ahead, I gave a shout for him to stand still lest he chose to be shot in the back for a rascally sneak. Whereat he turned, gave a jeering laugh at me, and then

went on at a quickened pace. So that I was in two minds whether to execute the threat, when a pistol cracked suddenly behind me, and a bullet tore an unseemly hole through the flap of my bonnet.

Nor had I barely time to glance backwards ere a second pistol gave a report, and another ball whizzed past my head whose aim had been true enough had I not stepped somewhat out of line in turning. Seeing therefore that I was outnumbered three to one,—the rogues behind being the same pair I had just passed, whilst Seager, too, was now running towards me,—I broke away into the thicket bordering the path.

Then, dodging behind and beneath a shrub of a dense foliage, I was well content to lie hidden a moment, and remain discreetly silent. For I now saw that I had been artfully trapped; and whether they sought merely to satisfy their own despite upon me, or to drag me before his Excellency to be dealt with scarcely less summarily for running the guard, was of slight choice to me at this time. Drawing my pistol, I watched them beating about the thicket, albeit they passed so close to me at times that I could have winged two of them at one shot.

"The devil!" I heard Seager exclaim, "he has escaped us after all. And to think, gentlemen," he continued as they beat about the bush, "that this knave whom I fetched from England in my own party, should turn out to



“Drawing my pistol, I watched them beating about the thicket.” — Page 120.

be such a rebellious rogue and cause us all so much annoyance! By my faith! 'tis bound to put me in great disfavour. Come, a guinea to each of you if we fetch him before the governor!"

"Keep your money!" answered one of them with an oath. "I have a score of my own to settle."

"As you please," replied Seager airily; "yet I would willing give it."

Wondering whether it were my own guinea he so generously staked in my behalf, it galled me mightily, I remember, after all I had done for him in the past, that he should lie about me so and know so little loyalty. So that, whilst his face came in front of my muzzle, I was half a mind to place him where rogues of his kind, belike, have scant cause for feeling grateful. But 'tis a trick I have never served any one, — save, mayhap, a savage in war-paint who was out for murder; accordingly, as they reluctantly gave up the search and went on, I was fain to make the best of my way out of the thicket into the path, and repace my steps quickly back to the highway. Thence, resolving in future to be more cautious till something should occur to divert my enemies' attention in some other channel, I returned direct to the ordinary.

Master Lawrence was speaking in a low voice to a tall, dark-complexioned man as I entered.

Looking round for an instant, thoughtfully, and catching my eye, he signed for me to join them. "Master Bacon," said he, turning to the gentleman at his side, "let me acquaint you with a new friend and supporter, — Sergeant Vivian, lately from home."

So saying, Master Lawrence bowed and withdrew.

Removing our bonnets as we bowed and saluted, I saw that he scanned me keenly; howbeit, his face spoke welcome, nor have I forgotten to this day the strong and vigorous character which I there read clearly portrayed. He was a man of about my own height, the face being of a swarthy and somewhat melancholy cast. The eyes were dark, large, and of an open fearlessness in their expression. Yet they were kindly eyes, such as a dreamer might have had who had been wont to search the past, and to peer, hopefully and unswervingly, far into the future. The nose was long and somewhat aquiline, suggesting the aggressive nature of the man; whilst the mouth and chin, immaculate of hair, were fine and beautifully moulded as of an ascetic.

"So you have concluded," he asked, in a round melodious voice, "to stake your fortunes with ours, Sergeant Vivian?"

"All that I have, sir," I replied frankly, "though I fear me it is but little to stake."

"Hence your winnings, sir," he returned

with a smile, "shall be the more creditable. But do not set too low value on your services at this time, I prythee. For it is men that we need at present, sir; men who have seen somewhat of the world, and have battled for their rights and their country in times of danger; recking little of the price of a blow till the day is fought — and won. England," he continued thoughtfully, "once could boast a worthy meed of such, but the mawkish life of the court has wrought its curse by sapping the spirit of all alike."

There was a quiet force in his words, I remember, that went home to me with all their latent significancy. Yet was it not so much the little he said, but a certain rapt manner of speaking — the same, I have observed, that occasionally attends on little men out of their infinite conceit, but which is never to be mistaken for that conscious sincerity of a great soul soaring free from all restraint of prejudice. Of his wide notoriety as an orator I had oft heard rumour; and, hearing him afterwards, I learned how that, under the magic alchemy of his words, men were moved to see far and beyond the vista of their ken, — their ignorance resolved into wisdom, the fearsomeness of their arms nerved into swift bravery, whilst the truth — the grand keystone to all that he said — would shine out amid the sullen clouds of doubt and oppression like a cross of bur-

nished gold, a thing to love, to cling to, and to protect.

Presently, after speaking for a space of colonial affairs, as though to know somewhat my own impressions, he added: "But our country, sir, is yet unknown to you, I presume."

"Not wholly, sir," I replied; and thereupon I explained to him that I had already been as far back as Curles and barely missed making his acquaintance at the time.

"Indeed!" he exclaimed, starting slightly, "and you called perchance at my plantation?"

"Perforce, sir, such being the purpose of my ride," I answered. And whilst his surprised expression gave place gradually to an angry frown, I proceeded to tell him in detail of the message that had been sent him and the manner of its defeat.

"Aye, sir, a clever trick!" he answered passionately. "I greatly misdoubted the knave after he had spoken, yet the mention of Mistress Langdon's name reassured me. Howbeit, the deed is done. But I can never return to Curles without my commission granting me the power to protect my own, and to assist my neighbours when appealed to against the attacks of the Indians. Suchwise, sir, my release by the governor is only a trick, of no consequence to me, or of any risk to himself; for he well knows

that I shall not go very far away from Jamestown before securing my commission."

"Tut, man! nor do you need go very far from Jamestown at present for enlivening scenes," spoke up Master Lawrence, who had caught the last of Master Bacon's remark as he again joined us. "There is our good friend, his Excellency," he continued, "giving a ball to-night that he may display his coy affection for us; and incidentally, belike," he added quizzically, "hoping to crush Antæus by lifting him off the floor with the ecstasy of the fiddle and dance, hence humiliating him before the pygmies. Come, my friends, what say you; shall we attend?"

"In good sooth, Lawrence," answered Master Bacon with a laugh, "'tis a thing that had not occurred to me before."

"Well, 'tis not too late," he persisted, "though you will be forced to attend without your wife. Howbeit, gentlemen, methinks a ball is not always spoilt for lack of a wife. Wherefore to prove it, in the event of the three of us going together I may perchance prevail upon Mistress Lawrence to remain at home and observe the best interests of the ordinary."

"By my faith, sir! whilst you go dance to the best interests—and observe the prettiest women—of all Virginia. Lord, sir," cried Master Bacon, "who could resist you? Come,

Master Vivian, do you consent to go with us?"

"You forget, gentlemen," I protested, without the faintest thought of accepting, "that I am neither of the Council nor of the House of Burgesses."

"Pish! you are our guest," said Lawrence.

"But there are sufficient reasons," I urged, "why I should not expose myself to his Excellency at present."

"How so?" asked Lawrence doubtingly.

"Chut! I'll answer for the amenity of the old rogue's behaviour this night," assured Master Bacon.

"Aye, come along, my friend," cried Master Lawrence in a manner that left no doubt of its heartiness; then, in a confidential tone, "and I promise you shall meet the sweetest girl in all Virginia."

Chapter VIII

The Ball at the Mansion

SHORTLY past the hour of eight that night I left the ordinary in company with Masters Bacon and Lawrence, and set off up the road leading to Governor Berkeley's. The streets had again become quiet since the excitement of the morning attendant on Master Bacon's trial. A number of coaches, however, with flaring lights, passed us here and there along the way, together with frequent couples on horseback, laughing and chatting gayly, all going in the direction of the mansion. The moon had not yet risen, and the road, bordered with its tall trees of dense foliage, lay somewhat dark before us ; but as we approached the governor's premises, the space round the buildings shone enchantingly with a pale light from many lanterns of coloured paper—such as I had once seen at Vauxhall during a fête—hung here and there amongst the trees, and heightened by the brighter glare streaming outwards from the long low windows of the mansion.

Turning in at the gateway, on either side of which stood a sentinel in the uniform of the governor's guard, we passed on up the walk

leading to the main entrance, which stood wide open on to the broad verandah. Crossing the threshold, we entered a spacious hall running the entire length of the mansion. In front, nigh half the space was occupied by a noble staircase, with its beautiful newel and graceful railing; and, running the length of the walls, was a high oaken wainscoting, interrupted only by a carved chimney-piece, and the doors opening into the parlours and library on either side.

Following the liveried footman down the hall, which was already crowded with a goodly assemblage, we were conducted to the gentlemen's waiting-room. Scarce had we entered, however, when we were greeted by a gentleman, elegantly attired, and of a cheery speech that won the heart at once.

"Good-evening, gentlemen," he cried. "Master Bacon, let me congratulate you on your appearance under more joyous environment than of the morning. But Henrico County," he continued, a courteous raillery in his manner, "has ever been turbulent and inclined to reforms since your worshipful burgess, Master Hatcher, was summarily dealt with for saying that the mouth of the House, Master Speaker Hill, was a devil."

"And by my faith, sir! Master Hatcher spoke the plain truth about Hill," declared Lawrence roundly.

"Aye, Master Hammond, if what I've heard

be true," added Master Bacon loyally. "But let me acquaint you with our friend and guest. Master Vivian," he continued with a bow, "Master John Hammond, burgess from the lower parish of the Isle of Wight."

"And author of that scandalous book, 'Leah and Rachel,'" laughed Master Lawrence, "for which he was made to be expelled the House by the worshipful burgesses."

"Tut, tut, man! speak not to every stranger of those two maids of my undoing," protested Master Hammond ironically. And to me: "Sir, it grieves me to give you welcome to Virginia for the first time in the company of as great a pair of rogues as ever plotted freedom in a tap-room."

"Nay," continued Lawrence, not to be outdone, "I do assert, sir, that yours was the greater crime and less like to be forgotten. Bethink yourselves, gentlemen! After his Excellency's known hostility to books and printing and other temptations of the devil, Master Hammond, here, almost upon the gad, as 'twere, writes a book! But, ods-pitikins, man! why it was you didn't name it Adam and Eve in the garden of Virginia, with a graceful sketch of his Excellency in the guise of the royal wily, hath ever been a mystery to me."

"Drat the book, Lawrence, and the critics, too, say I! But come, gentlemen, let us be

dancing ; lest we be plotting treason in the very home of our excellent ruler." So saying, Master Hammond led the way out and we followed.

Thence, passing on through the hall again, we ascended the wide and gliding staircase to the floor above, where it landed almost at the entrance of the assembly-room. Here the hardwood floor, polished and waxed, shone like a mirror under the feet of the company. At the far end of the room, to the side of a carved chimney-piece, stood a low stage that was occupied by a band of ten goodly fiddlers and viol players. Glancing rapidly round the room, I noted its painted wainscoting, of an odd design, running continuously ; and above, Italian cornices that caught and held the eye for a moment's admiration.

A group of gentlemen with their ladies stood at the right of the door as we entered. In their midst, and a little in front, stood Sir William Berkeley, and by his side, resplendent in rich clothes and costly jewellery, was a lady many years his junior. This, Master Lawrence whispered, was Lady Frances Berkeley, — adding under his breath, "Chut ! — she is the devil !"

Yet was she fair to look upon, methought, being of a trim figure, though somewhat small of stature. The face, with its open blue eyes, was winning in its general expression, save for an ill-defined and scarce noticeable turning upwards of the tip of the nose, as though in half-

contempt of all and everything round her. Such, I opine, must have been the cause, for there was naught else save a delicate perfume and fragrancy round her wherewith to offend that sensitive organ. For her sake it was, and by reason of her persistency—or so many Virginians fancied—that her husband had so oft become embroiled in difficulties with them that were even now pending settlement. For she was jealous and quick to perceive anything that promised to advance the fortunes of the house of Berkeley; albeit—as is frequently the case, I have observed, with women of her kind when so situate—she was easily excited to wrath, and uncommon slow to forgive any one who happed to run counter to her own or her husband's interests, however selfish.

Suchwise then, and mayhap because Master Lawrence never spoke very highly of widows of late,—to which order Lady Frances had once belonged,—he now classed her whilst we entered the room, under the one general head. Yet who shall condemn such; for what can form a more heightened or pleasing contrast in all nature than the flaming attire of the Prince of Darkness against the darksome habit of the sprightly widow? Nor can such libel—if such it be—ever detract to a gentleman so much as a jot or a tittle from any of the charms of this sable and seductive sisterhood.

Yet it was little wonder that a sudden cloud

swept over her face, and that the corners of her mouth were relentlessly drawn down, when she saw Master Bacon standing before her with Lawrence and myself at either hand. She did not offer him her hand as he bowed on one knee before her, and half turned her head aside as he rose and presented us to Sir William. With Master Lawrence, I knew he was nicely acquaint already; so did but little wonder, knowing the grudge they bore each other, to see his Excellency turn from him with scarce a word.

Eying me closely for an instant, he then unbent, graciously. "You are late from England, Master Vivian, I learn?" he asked pleasantly.

"Yes, your Excellency," I replied, bowing low, but inwardly wishing that he had taken less interest in learning even this little of myself.

"And the good King Charles," he asked; "is he in the enjoyment of sound health and the continued love and respect of his subjects?"

Remembering how I had last seen the king in broad daylight, darkly vizarded, with several of the women of the court and play-house romping round the town, I hastened to assure him, —

"His gracious Majesty, your Excellency, is the same as usual."

"Sh!" laughed Lawrence, with his hand to his mouth, as Sir William looked away for a moment. "Sh! that's a poser for him."

The fiddlers, striking up a brantle, now relieved me from further questioning; whilst Sir William and Lady Frances took their position at the head and led off, followed by full a score of other couples in their turn. A pretty scene, in sooth, and I stood there watching it with delight until the close. Presently a livelier tune was timed to the coranto; whilst Colonel Philip Ludwell took the hand of Lady Frances—it being a dance somewhat too capering, or, peradventure, thought too undignified for the indulgency of his Excellency—and stepped the measures with her in perfect rhythm to the music.

Master Bacon now approached me with a little lady, brilliantly attired, and sparkling with rich jewellery, leaning upon his arm. To her he presented me, naming her as Mistress Mary Byrd, the wife of young Master Byrd, his fellow-burgess from Henrico County. Begging the favour of her little hand for the following dance, that by good fortune chanced to be the minuet of the reigning king of France, I was so carried away by the poesy of it all, I remember, that for the moment I forgot that this was still Virginia, whilst the stately dames and beautiful maidens, with their powdered hair and floating laces around snowy shoulders, stepped and courtesied round me. Beautiful painted butterflies they seemed for the greater part, with heads finely poised, their

bright eyes and rosy lips scattering sunshine round the brilliant room. Stepping from out some distant fairy-land into this new world of ours, forsooth, to soil their dainty hands in common toil, and surrender their hearts in affection to these rough gentlemen in powdered perukes and sun-burnt faces dancing round them.

But how it was that after this dance such a merry rollicking movement as the Virginia Reel could follow, was a mystery never to be forgotten. All down the hall the couples formed, merrily vis-à-vis. Then, whilst the fiddlers rose up in their chairs and drew their bows to an enlivening strain, stateliness was unceremoniously put aside, and naught save joyous abandon filled the hearts of the dancers, the while they galloped up and down the centre, crossing and turning rapidly, the ladies all the time holding their flounces and furbelows, and their long, puffed-out skirts coquettishly out of mischief, such as was a delight to behold.

To my great disappointment, however, I had seen naught of Mistress Langdon as yet. But now, after the reel was danced, and as I stood apart to one side of the room, I saw Master Lawrence approaching with a lady on his arm. Nor did it require a second glance for me to know her. And yet she did not discover me, until nearly face to face; whilst even then — although I saw the colour mantle swiftly o'er

her face in recognition — she made as if she would pass straight on without a sign.

But Master Lawrence chose otherwise. Bringing his partner to a stop squarely before me, he said, in a manner of gentle assurance: "Permit me, my dear, to beg that Mistress Langdon will favour my friend, Master Vivian, with the charm of her acquaintance."

And, though she courtesied to me distantly, I still remarked the beautiful head, covered with snowy powder, bent gently toward the bosom, the knee almost to the floor, and the little red slipper with its high heel peeping an instant at me from beneath the rustling silken skirt.

Then, and as though she had fain passed on, whilst Master Lawrence bowed and withdrew, she turned slowly towards me. "I can but marvel, sir," she said, her face flushing indignantly, "at your effrontery in daring to face me here."

Though in a measure prepared by the coolness I had remarked in her demeanour as she approached, yet was I in no wise ready for such an assailment of discourteous words from her lips. Nor could I place but one construction on them, and that the worst. For, knowing that she was wont to move proudly and aright under her dower of beauty and of birth, I could think of naught save that it shamed her to recognize me there — a man of scant resource and of

uncertain fame — in the presence of her friends. Wherefore, with a low bow, I was on the point of withdrawing without a word.

“One moment, sir,” she said hastily; “you may return the token loaned you, and then go.”

“I am sorry, my lady,” I answered, as I remembered with dismay how, in my hurry to leave Mistress Bacon on learning of her husband’s imminent danger, I had ridden away leaving Mistress Langdon’s ring in her possession. “It is impossible, my lady, to —”

“My faith! what insolence is this!” she cried angrily. “Impossible, you say, sir, to hand back my ring?”

“Yes and no, my lady, in all fairness,” I began. “When I delivered my message —”

“And it was delivered very well, it seems,” she retorted, stamping her foot impatiently. “But I seek no explanations from you, Master Vivian. Keep the ring, I say, keep it! — as a pledge of your broken faith!”

And ere I could utter another word in protest, she had swept haughtily past me, her head disdainfully carried, a crimson spot blazing in either cheek. In great amazement at her manner, I stood there for a space. Surely I had done her errand in all respects, save to bring back her ring. And again, methought, I could see Mistress Bacon standing there in the doorway in distress over the token I had handed her, and all that it signified. Yet whilst the

fiddles played on, and the gliding feet of the merry dancers played the very devil in my ears as I stood there beneath the shadow of her scorn, I still remembered in my chagrin how I had carried messages for Churchill from Turenne with the sound of other and quite different music ringing in them. How it was ever "Sergeant Vivian this, and Sergeant Vivian that"—and in tones of hearty respect and good-will—whenever they had need of a knave whose valour had already been put to the proof. But to carry a message fifty miles from one woman to another, without incurring the displeasure or suspicion of either,—or both, as I had done,—zounds! such were a trick for a courtier rather than a feat for a soldier, the maladventures of which I prayed to be exempt from ever after!

So thinking, half in anger at every one, and half, I fear me, in very contempt and pity of myself, I turned to leave the room. But near the door I again caught sight of Mistress Langdon. She was looking somewhat pale, methought, but, ah, how beautiful still! The fairness of her neck and shoulders in gentle contrast to her gown, which was of a pale yellow like the sunset clouds in summer. The wavy hair, trained back over the forehead, was caught up in some mystical way so as to present everywhere a graceful roundness of form; whilst as she moved her fan lightly to and fro,

the full sleeve fell away, revealing a snowy and perfectly moulded arm.

The flush of indignation had now passed from her cheeks, and her eyes, I could see, were peering thoughtfully far beyond the confines of the ball-room. So that she scarce saw for a moment a gentleman who had quietly approached, and now stood bowing before her, his back towards me, seeming to bespeak the favour of her hand for the dance.

With some reluctance, I thought, she consented, as though equally indifferent to the dance or the partner. Then as she silently accepted and the man turned round and came towards me with her on his arm, passing so close to me that I caught the sweet scent of the jasmine girdled at her waist, I saw at once—and it staggered me for a moment—that her partner was none other than Seager, whom I had at first failed to recognize in his showy regimentals.

I became on the instant so filled with jealous wrath, that I was tempted to stand before the scoundrel then and there and expose him to the contempt of Mistress Langdon and the assembled guests. Yet it required little wit to know that for me to create such a scene would react only to my own discomfiture before his Excellency. So, telling myself—despite the cry at my heart—that whatever Mistress Langdon was pleased to do could on no ac-



“Seeming to bespeak the favour of her hand for the dance.” — Page 138.

count be of the slightest concern to myself, I passed on through the door and down the stairs to the hall below. Then, securing my cloak and bonnet, I set off homeward without further ado.

Several days now passed without my seeing much of either Masters Bacon or Lawrence. Friends and supporters were constantly calling at the ordinary, they being generally men of a liberal spirit and quick to perceive the pressing necessities of the country. Nor were these meetings proper conventions for conservatives to attend, there being at that time precious little use that any of us had for gentlemen of that kidney, as the following well-remembered words from one of Lawrence's speeches will explain. "My friends," said he, "note well that there are but two things in all the world which a conservative does in sooth conserve; namely, the Past, and his own ignorance. No great poet, philosopher, or benefactor of humanity was ever in his day called a conservative; nay, such had always to fight valiantly for every spark of truth that had flashed upon his soul." Whereat, generous cheers following, Master Lawrence proceeded to illustrate his remarks by the citement of classic history, mentioning Nero, Herod, Pontius Pilate, Socrates' jurymen, and the names of other and somewhat modern gentlemen who belonged to this abhorrent group that sought, not to

conserve the welfare of the many, but merely their own outrageous property interests, though the devil take the hindmost and all posterity!

After this manner, therefore, it will not seem strange that the current of feeling was wont to flow high at times and with a goodly force; so that this ordinary of Master Lawrence's came in a few days to be the real statehouse for the people's representatives, where affairs of moment were brought forward for discussion and active measures passed for reform. So far, however, no restraint had been placed upon us, though everybody knew that his Excellency was keeping a wrathful eye upon the place, and that some day his gathering wrathfulness would be let loose and the meetings broken up in confusion.

In quick confirmation of such fears, as I was returning early one evening to the ordinary I encountered Master Henry, who informed me, with much nicety of detail, of a piece of news he had just caught up at the "Sailor's Yarn." Master Seager, it seemed, being half-seas-over, had revealed a plan of descent that was to take place against Master Lawrence's ordinary early on the morrow. Master Bacon was to be re-arrested, and such other traitors and adventurous knaves as were to be found there—including myself, Master Seager had sworn with an oath—were to be disposed of with

military despatch. Assuring myself, therefore, by careful questioning of Henry that this was no idle boast he had heard, but was actually the governor's intent, I thanked him for his timely warning and hurried on.

Being fortunate in finding Masters Lawrence and Bacon sitting together when I entered, without wasting words I proceeded to tell them briefly the news I had learned.

"Well, my friends," said Master Bacon coolly, "there's nothing for it but to cut and run. I well knew my release was only a trick to quiet the popular clamour. Now that it has subsided somewhat, the old rogue will attempt to wreak his hatred upon me."

Making no answer for a space, Master Lawrence appeared to be lost in thought or indifference. Then, speaking in suave tones, he said: "Still, my friend, you are released on parole, naught being said about your remaining in Jamestown. Why not, then, try a change of air? Take Master Vivian with you for a quick ride into the country and be back here by early morning. To be sure, sir, you need not come alone. Bring your friends with you, sir, a hundred or more if it please you. Leastwise it will please Mistress Lawrence by filling the ordinary, and belike it will have a nice effect in again dispelling the humours from the mind of his Excellency."

"By heavens, sir, the very play!" cried

Master Bacon heartily, springing to his feet. "Come, my friend, will you join me?"

"With pleasure, sir," I answered. "In sooth, I've no desire to be here should the governor chance to call informally."

"Aye, you may mark my words, Master Vivian," he replied, "that Berkeley is one of the kind that neither forgets nor forgives."

"But," asked Lawrence in a puzzle, "what reason can he have to be offended with you?"

"Only for a little service, Master Lawrence, that I attempted to render Master Bacon," said I, proceeding to tell him of my ride to Curles.

"Ha, you sly knave!" said he when I had done. "So you had already met the fair before the night of the ball? She should have treated you handsomely, by my troth, sir! yet I remember that you departed early without waiting for me."

"Yes," I answered, regretting the turn of our converse.

"And yet you dance, methinks?" he asked pertinently.

"Sometimes, Master Lawrence," I assured him, though there was scarce any divertisement in which I took more delight.

"Then why, my friend," — but scanning my face sharply, and seeing that I accepted his offices with but scant patience, he desisted. "Pardon me, sir; both of you being friends of mine, gave me, methought, just ground for asking."

"Pish! it is of no consequence, Master Lawrence," I answered, whilst feeling my face flush hot at the remembrance of it all. But as the kindly manner of his words went home to me, I exclaimed indignantly, "She treated me like a fool, sir, or a lackey—I scarce know which!"

"Softly, softly; bethink yourself, my friend, there must have been some misunderstanding," he urged.

"Misunderstanding!" I cried. "Did I not deliver her message to Mistress Bacon?"

"But what said Mistress Langdon to you, sir?" he persisted. "Did she say nothing of your failure?"

"Nay," said I, raising my glass that I knew was empty to my lips, in an attempt to cover my confusion, "she said naught that it pleases me to recall, sir."

"Come, come! nothing about the message?" he again asked.

Recalling her words, regardless, I answered, "She admitted, sir, that I had delivered her message very well."

"Ha, ha! where were your wits, man?" he cried. "Did you not see that she could have heard only vague rumours of the particulars of Master Bacon's arrest?"

"She is the governor's niece," I retorted, smarting, and not catching the tenor of his defence.

"Pish!" said he. "Be assured that the old rascal has caught an inkling of the drift of affairs by this time, and that his niece hears little or nothing of the reports that now reach him. In sooth, recollecting the lateness of her appearance on the night of the ball, and then only after much importuning of his Excellency, I fear me she may even now be suffering his displeasure."

"Surely, sir, I trust not," I answered quickly.

"Nay, and let me tell you, Master Vivian," he continued, "the report I heard relative to our friend's arrest. I was told that a man, somewhat elegantly attired after the latest fashion, and accompanied by two knaves, had ridden to Curles, delivered a message to Mistress Bacon, and secured the confidence of her husband to help him escape arrest by flight in his sloop. Of a surety, sir, I heard naught of any other knave, whose wear," — and he winked at Master Bacon, — "perchance, was somewhat richer, and accompanied by the same complement of knaves, delivering another message to Mistress Bacon somewhat later. In fact, my friend, no one can know of this ride of yours save Seager and the governor, besides those concerned with yourself."

Whereat he ended, whilst I had nothing to say in protest as I reviewed the disastrous adventure from beginning to end. Not until Master Bacon, giving me a clap on the back,

cried out: "You see, my friend, my service has strange vicissitudes." Whereupon he asked me, slyly, which experience were the fittest test of a man's nerve: that of the ball-room, or to be recklessly standing in the middle of the James on the seat of a rotten skiff about to sink to the bottom?

"Would to heaven, sir," I exclaimed fervently, "that it had ere ever I had reached the shallows!"

"Nay, nothing is final, sir — with men," he cried, standing mockly erect. "And as to women, let me tell you, my friend, when you have once stirred their interest, their curiosity mayhap, leave them alone the while their romantic fancy drives them on straight towards you."

"Straight to destruction, sir, why say you not in gallant fairness?" asked Lawrence with a laugh. "Yet are you somewhat of a seer, my friend," he continued. "For what says Terence: 'I know the disposition of women: when you will, they won't; when you won't, they set their hearts upon you of their own inclination.'"

And whilst we laughed at his apt philosophy, he went on, spouting eloquently those lines of that young coxcomb, Master Thomas Otway:

" 'What mighty ills have not been done by women!
Who was't betrayed the Capitol? A woman!
Who lost Mark Antony the world? A woman!
Who was the cause of a long ten years' war,

And laid at last old Troy in ashes ? — Woman !
Destructive, damnable, deceitful wom—' ”

“ Faith, Master Lawrence ! ” snapped his stout goodwife, entering the room quietly without his seeing her, just in time to catch the final lines and interrupt their ungallant peroration. “ It’s my belief, sir, that if men paid more heed to their business and less to politicks, sir, the women wouldn’t trouble them much. God-a’-mercy, sir, are you never going to close the ordinary to-night ? ”

“ Directly, my dear, directly,” answered Master Lawrence mildly, quailing somewhat before her flashing eyes. For though he was becoming nicely accustomed to her management, it was notorious that she relished his popularity among the people only because of the business it brought to the ordinary. Yet when she bethought herself how he was endangering them, and laying their property liable to confiscation by his open and active participation in the politicks of the colony, then was she wont to wax mightily wroth, and, with much juniper in her utterance, have at him with scant heed to time or place.

Hence, perceiving that we were in disfavour, Master Bacon cried heartily : “ Come, Vivian, you and I should be starting. Good-night, my good friends ! ”

Chapter IX

Master Bacon's Commission

EQUIPPING ourselves for a night's ride, Master Bacon and I shortly left the ordinary on the way to the stables. His plan, he told me softly whilst we walked along, was to muster not merely a hundred, but all the men he could find ere the morn should break, and return to Jamestown with all haste.

As we were passing the ordinary where the Henrys were lodged, I told him of the lads, whom I thought would be glad to enlist with us.

"Certainly, we want them," he said, coming to a halt. "But do you rouse them whilst I go on and get the horses in readiness."

Feeling my way in the darkness, I walked up to the front of the building, where I at length made out to find the door. Rapping firmly with my knuckles, I waited a space. But getting no response, and after vainly repeating with the same ill-success, I was obliged to rap loudly with my sword-hilt and in great danger of rousing the neighbourhood, — as the sound echoed away in the night from tree to tree, — ere I finally heard footsteps within, followed by the unbarring of the door.

Allowing it to open slightly, an old lady, with a peaked nightcap on her head, presented herself in the gap. Holding a flaring candle above her head and peering out into the gloom, she asked, in a voice that trembled in quick sympathy with the fear writ in her wrinkled features, "What would you, kind sir?"

"Nothing, nothing, my goodwife!" I exclaimed in very pity of her comical fearsomeness. "I would only speak with the Henrys a moment, if it please you."

"The Henrys, sir?" she asked.

"Yes, goodwife," said I quietly.

"There is naught gone wrong with the lads, sir, I trust?" she again asked, only partially reassured.

"No, no!" I replied, a trifle impatient at this delay. "The lads are all right, but time is priceless. Kindly call them at once, goodwife, and tell them that Sergeant Vivian is waiting at the door."

After waiting a few moments, the men appeared. "Another little ride, Master Henry," said I to the elder. "Do you and your brother care to join me?"

"Certainly, sir," he answered willingly. "Shall we need arms—another pirate, perchance?"

"Aye," I answered dryly; "we are after the arch-smuggler of all Virginia. Step lively, lads, whilst I wait here!"

It pleased me to note their willingness, and that they were gone but a second before returning properly equipped. This, no doubt, was in part due to there being at this time no demand for employment in Virginia. Matters were absolutely at a standstill, one industry after another being forced to suspend on account of the excessive taxation, whilst the revenues were scattered, no man — save one — knew whither. Anything, then, that offered work at living wages to a mass of men — many of them late arrivals who were neither indents nor grandees — even war, and especially with the savages, was likely to be hailed with delight as a relief to present necessities.

“Off again, sir, I see,” cried Master Dale, good-naturedly, as we entered the stables.

“Aye,” said I, “and may better luck attend me, — even though you have given me the same nag.”

“Stay, Vivian!” interposed Master Bacon, as I was about to mount, “you could, if you chose, do me a greater service than to go with me.”

In wonderment at his meaning, I slipped my foot out of the stirrup and stood before him.

“In this wise,” he continued. “Lend me your men, and do you remain here and keep watch.”

“What! when you expect to be back here by daylight?”

"Mayhap," he replied; "but the governor may prevent, or my men found wanting in number—who knows? But you are loth, I see."

Now, seeing him sitting there astride his horse preparatory to riding away for action amongst his men, whilst I remained behind in full sight of his Excellency, whom I felt it would be inconvenient for me to meet, I answered: "Only reasonably so, I trust, Master Bacon."

"Nay, hearken," he began impatiently; then, reining his horse sidewise and leaning over his saddle, he continued in a low voice, "listen to me, my good friend! I can have no means of knowing what steps the governor may take when he hears—should I be delayed—that I have escaped. He assuredly knows it would not be my purpose to long stay away and leave him master of affairs. Nay; you may depend upon it that he will expect me back shortly with a command sufficiently strong to compel him to sign my commission without further delay. So do you stay and watch him. If he succeeds in mustering the train-bands in any force, ride out, or send a messenger on the Middle Plantation road to inform me."

"Very well, sir," I answered readily, perceiving the cogency of his remarks, and ashamed to think that I had been loth a moment before. "I shall return to the ordinary, then."

"No, not that!" he exclaimed hastily.

"Yet I assure you, sir, when the old rascal hears that I have escaped him he will be too vexed to bethink himself of lesser offenders. Ho there, Master Dale!" he called, "can you lodge my friend with you a few days?"

"Surely, sir, with pleasure," said he promptly.

Telling my men, therefore, that they were to ride with Master Bacon, and assuring him of my purpose to watch zealously after our interests in Jamestown, I bade him God-speed.

The following morning, after breakfasting with Master Dale and his goodwife, I effected such change in my appearance as I well could by putting aside my sword, and donning a long great-coat and slouch hat that he kindly loaned me. I then ventured forth. Coming presently in sight of the assembly-hall, although it was scarce two hours past sun-up, I observed a goodly crowd already gathered there and passing in at the door. Marvelling at the cause for this assemblage at such an unwonted hour, I continued on into its midst and, feeling sure of my disguise, shortly filed into the building behind the others.

On the stage where Master Bacon's trial occurred, a number of men were again seated. This time, however, all kept their hats on, save one, who sat before a small table in their midst. He, I was told, was the Speaker of the House of Burgesses that was now in session.

At this news I was greatly surprised ; for, the governor having dismissed them shortly after Master Bacon's trial, with instructions to consider ways and means of putting a stop to Indian depredations, their assembling now must surely be counter to his wishes.

In this opinion I was confirmed by what followed. Instead of considering the Indian difficulty, motions were now being put by first one burgess and then another—respectfully removing their hats when they arose to address the Speaker—looking to the redressing of divers grievances. And chief of all, amidst much confusion, a committee was bravely appointed to inspect the publick revenues and collectors' accounts !

Matters had reached this point when a messenger arrived from the governor. In hot haste he proceeded straight up to the Speaker's table and handed him a missive. Breaking the seal, the Speaker glanced swiftly at its contents ; then, rising to his feet, and clearing his throat harshly—and I remember it seemed to sound up from the very bottom of the deep silence—he read, —

“To the Most Worshipful Burgesses of Virginia in convention assembled, his Excellency, Sir William Berkeley, Governor of Virginia, sends greeting. It having haply come to the governor's ear that his beloved burgesses have so opportunely assembled, it behooves his

Excellency to remind them that they shall deal with no irrelevancies or vagaries concerning publick revenues, but that portending Indian troubles may be prayerfully considered, and means and measures devised for their speedy relief. Signed, Sir William Berkeley, Governor of Virginia."

Instantly the hall was in a turmoil. "Master Speaker! Master Speaker! Master Speaker!" shouted out a score or more of the burgesses, springing to their feet at the same moment.

"Silence! silence, gentlemen! Put on your hats, I say, and be seated!" cried the Speaker, rapping sharply on the table with his gavel.

Howbeit, this command served only to bring another to his feet. "Hear, Master Speaker!" he shouted, whilst another hat came off. "Hear, I prythee, the—"

"Put on your hat, sir!" again cried the Speaker, getting red in the face. "Be seated, I say, all save Master Wilson. He has the floor."

Again the clamour rose high at this preference, the factions for and opposed to the governor both seeking to be heard at once. Until Master Speaker, losing all patience, shouted out: "Damn it, gentlemen! Will you put on your hats and be seated, or must I call the guard to bring us to order?"

This threat had its effect. And whilst the others slowly sat down in sore reluctance, Master Wilson held the floor, and moved that

his Excellency be petitioned to assign two gentlemen of the Council to sit with them and assist them in their debates.

But again the faces of the followers of Master Bacon grew dark. "It be my opinion, gentlemen," said the burgess of Stafford County, on being privileged to cool his head and to stand on his feet, "that 'twould be as well for the committee to first report to this House, when we can then decide on what points it were needful to trouble his Excellency."

"But, Master Speaker," urged an opponent, "such has always been customary!"

Once more the Speaker began rapping for silence, when Master Presly rose up and declared bluntly: "'Tis true it has been customary, but if we have any bad customs amongst us we are come here to mend them."

Whereupon, as though to subdue the advantage gained by the cheering of this sally, the governor's faction now quickly ushered in a distinguished visitor, crying out: "The Queen of Pamunkey, Master Speaker."

The appearance of this personage, as I now recall her, was strange and wild, albeit picturesque. She was attired in a voluminous robe of deerskin, with the fur outwards, and decorated with fringes from shoulders to feet, whilst around her forehead she wore a thick plait of white and black wampum by way of a crown. In her comportment there was a quiet dignity,

grave always, and at times graceful even to admiration. At her right hand stood an interpreter, whilst at her left stood her son, a lad of about twenty, whose father — rumour said — was an English colonel.

Being persuaded to be seated, she was asked by the chairman of the committee on Indian affairs, how many Indians she would lend them for guides in their war against the unfriendly tribes. But for a space she made no reply, affecting not to understand — though I learned afterwards that she knew our language perfectly — whilst she glanced first at her son and then at her interpreter as though for assistance. Gathering no encouragement from them, however, she burst out into a wild lament, her eyes filling with tears, and speaking in a tongue that few knew save for the words, "Totopotamoi chepiack!" which she repeated over and over again.

Finally, naught being done to appease the queen, one of the burgesses rose up, saying: "Gentlemen, all that this good woman says is true, to our shame. Some twenty years ago this woman's husband, Totopotamoi, led a hundred of his tribe to our assistance and was there slain. The queen is scoring us roundly for failing in any manner to compensate her for the killing of her husband."

But again, with scant heed to these words, the chairman asked, "How many Indians will you lend us?"

"Six," she answered bitterly, in a shrill voice.

Affecting not to have caught her reply, the chairman once more put the question to her. But she looked sullenly and disdainfully over him for a space ; till, persisting in his question in the same monotonous voice, harassed and defiant, she cried out, "Twelve !"

Then paying no heed to any one, and seeming not to see them, whilst her eyes flashed scornfully as though intent only on her wrongs, she turned and walked majestically out of the room without a word.

This scene stirred up much sympathy for the queen, even among the followers of Master Bacon, who were many of them old Indian fighters. Nor did it bode aught but ill for the governor and his party in their present bellical attitude on Indian affairs ; for without the aid of the friendly tribes in the capacity of guides, it would be well-nigh impossible to carry forward successfully a concerted campaign in the wilderness and up-country. However, there were few that had any faith in the governor's intent to undertake such emprise ; the feeling being general that this sudden spirit manifested by his Excellency was simply a scheme of hoodwinking the burgesses by exciting their minds against the savages, whilst he continued to plunder the people under the manifold niceties of his system and administration of publick revenues.

But the grave distrust and silent uneasiness that fell over the house when the Queen of Pamunkey walked out of their midst was suddenly swept aside now as a messenger sprang into the room. "Bacon is fled! Bacon is fled!" he shouted, whilst every one sprang to his feet. But it was pleasing to observe that, when the first thunder-clap of consternation had cleared away, most of the faces I saw wore a look of sunny and smiling satisfaction. True, a few dark clouds were to be seen here and there, but such were hopelessly scattered and dispersed.

Whereupon the House was hastily adjourned, and the people crowded out in much confusion.

Having seen nothing of Master Lawrence amongst the burgesses, however, I now went on to see if the threat we had heard the night before had been executed. A number of men were standing round the ordinary as I approached, all speaking eagerly, and now and then bursting out into a shout of laughter. As I entered the room, Master Lawrence looked straight at me, but at first failed to recognize me in the caparison I had loaned of Master Dale. Presently, however, his gravity gave way to a look of amusement whilst he cried, —

"Halloa! so you have deserted Master Bacon and turned planter, my friend?"

Explaining to him the purpose of my stay

in Jamestown, he began to speak of their visit from the guard, when Mistress Lawrence entered the room. She came straight up to us, her arms akimbo, her breath coming and going in quick gasps in rhythm with the angry rise and fall of her bosom.

"To think, Master Vivian!" she exclaimed, without other greeting as she recognized me, "that my house should be put to such an indignity. Those impudent rascals! they went from room to room in my house — my house, sir!" stamping her foot, "overhauling my closets, and tearing my linen in strips by running their swords through my best beds. And all, sir, under the pretence of searching for Master Bacon."

"Master Bacon?" I asked gently, hoping to stem the current of her wrath.

"Aye, sir," she continued, flying to the desk and snatching up a book which she opened close under my nose, "Master Bacon, who my books show squared his account and quit the ordinary only last night. But god-'a-mercy!" she broke out, squaring in front of her spouse, "'tis all your doings, Master Lawrence! With your politicks and burgesses and what not, we shall ever be in hot water with the governor."

Knowing that it was impossible for the good-wife to see farther than the end of her own nose, I could not wonder much — albeit I

felt for him — when Master Lawrence sought to mollify her wrathful upbraiding by repeating “Softly, softly, my dear,” rather than attempting to meet her half-way with that logic and argument by which he commonly won men to his persuasion. In sooth, to his wife Master Lawrence quoted scarce anything from the classics by way of precept. For, whenever his temerity carried him to such lengths, she would instantly straddle her distemper and over-ride all precedents like a flash, and, with a snap of her fingers, roundly declare that if he attended more to the ordinary and less to what some man long dead had once said, it would result vastly to their advantage.

However, all this went to prove, as I now bethink myself of the circumstances, what a sincere patriot Master Lawrence had come to be. For it is ever easy for men to drift with the current when there are no obstacles to be overcome. But, affable and scholarly gentleman that he was, robbed of all his possessions at the hands of the governor and now dependent solely on his wife for his keep, I clearly perceived that for him to hold his way firmly and sweetly amidst the people when so sorely beset at his own fireside, was a piece of self-sacrifice to wonder at and respect. Hence I have sometimes thought that, whilst it may oft be true that the evil a man does lives after him, such is scarce to be reckoned, and is more

than forgiven, by that generous indifference to petty and insignificant domestic differences which great men have ever displayed towards their wives, and which, no doubt, has oftentimes prevented the mischief that a woman might do from living after her.

But God rest her weary soul, and others of a similar tale ! For in sooth I do greatly pity a woman who, being of a nice rotundity of form and not displeasing to look upon, seems meant for cheerfuller things and happier moods ; yet Mistress Lawrence, when not engaged in giving her husband a downright juniper-lecture, had, I deplore to confess, but a figent jaundering jaw, such as would straightway impel a man out of the door and cause him to fain seek rest beside still waters among the quiet ways of the woods.

But this, however, is neither here nor there, the purpose of these memoirs being only to record and to condemn no one. So that, if she now flung herself out of the room in much the same vigorous spirit that she had entered, heaven knows the good Mistress Lawrence had much to prick her.

It being now two hours of noon, and still no sign of Master Bacon's return, I began to fear me that somewhat beyond common had detained our friend, and so expressed myself to Master Lawrence after this little flurry had abated.

"Aye," he replied, "a planter came in from the up-country early this morning, saying that the Indians on Queen's Creek were gathering to attack one of our forts on the York, and that the freeholders are hurrying to its defence."

"Then it may be several days," said I uneasily, "ere he will be able to return."

"Till to-morrow, mayhap," he answered confidently. "Master Bacon has a goodly antipathy to Indians, and an outbreak is quickly quelled when he takes a hand."

Restless and impatient whilst stirring scenes were being enacted round me, therefore, I was constrained to remain in Jamestown; but meanwhile dodging round here and there, and picking up such scraps of information as I well could. Yet no arrests had been made so far, nor at the time of the raiding of the ordinary. For as Master Bacon had anticipated, the governor was so fired on learning of his escape, that he was scant inclined to arrest any of his followers until he could feel assured that he should not afterwards be compelled to give an accounting to Master Bacon.

On the third morning following the flight of Master Bacon, I caught news of the summoning by his Excellency of the York and Gloucester train-bands, and that four cannon had been mounted at Sandy Beach guarding the approach by land to Jamestown. Hearing

this, I was in a quandary whether to ride at once with the news, or to wait and watch developments a few hours longer. Passing the assembly-hall, however, and observing a crowd gathered there, I paused and inquired the cause. And being told that the train-bands were expected within the hour, and that there was to be a grand review before the governor, I concluded to remain and count their forces whilst observing their evolutions.

The clock in the church spire had just struck the hour of eleven, when their vanguard—or such I first mistook it—hove in sight. Marching down the street, they came to a halt in front of the assembly-hall; and, no others following, I at length decided that these were all. Albeit only a little handful of men, numbering less than a hundred; mostly wearing bright uniforms, and a hang-dog expression as though in great shame of their paucity or their service.

And, presently, along came his Excellency, gloriously caparisoned in his regimentals, astride a nag whose dapples shone like satin in the bright sunlight as he bowed his neck to the curb and danced sidewise down the street. In sooth, he looked as smug as silk, so that it did me good to gaze at him; but as he reined up before the train-bands, I noted a look of astonishment sweep over his face, followed swiftly by one of infinite disgust as he glanced at them. Only for an instant, however, ere

his eyes blazed angrily, whilst he cried out in hot scorn, —

“Away with ye, ye knaves! Methought I had summoned the train-bands of York and Gloucester!”

And turning to the captain of the guard, he ordered him to see that the cannon at Sandy Beach were instantly dismounted; then tightening his reins cruelly, he brought his nag's head round with a jerk and went galloping back to the mansion.

Whereat the men dispersed. But with curses and mutterings of disaffection that were exceeding comical and provoked the laughter of the bystanders at their discomfiture. For they had marched no little distance through the night and morning to rally to the support of his Excellency, and it kindled their zeal but ill, I fear me, to be thanked in this wise. Hence, seeing the turn affairs had taken, I concluded there was no necessity for carrying word to Master Bacon, as Jamestown belonged to him now whenever he chose to enter.

And on this same day, a little past the hour of noon, I learned news of his near approach. A detachment having been sent forward by him, all roads leading out of Jamestown were seized and orders given to disarm every one who arrived either by boat or land. Shortly afterwards the army made its appearance; a host of six hundred men, all well armed with

fusils and broadswords, Master Bacon riding at their head. And, with drums beating and trumpets blaring, they held straight on to the green, where they halted not an arrow's flight from the state-house.

Whilst the rolling of the drum within announced that the assembly was being called, Master Bacon began advancing upon the building, a file of fusileers on either hand. Whereupon the excitement ran high, both outside and in, and, when half-way to the state-house, the windows became filled with heads sticking out and faces gazing at us in consternation. The next moment the door opened, and his Excellency himself advanced to meet Master Bacon face to face.

But the comportment of his Excellency, I remember, despite the dignity of his years, was preposterous. Strutting pompously forward to within a sword's length of his young adversary, as though he would fain prove him a coward, he suddenly snatched open the lace at his breast, crying tragically, —

"Stab me, Master Bacon! Draw your sword and stab me! 'Fore God, a fair mark!"

Master Bacon looked at him, a melancholy wonderment in his expression, whilst he continued to hold himself well in hand, as he replied: "My sword shall rust in its scabbard, your Excellency, ere ever I draw it to harm a hair of your head."

Starting back, as though he had received a slap in the face, it was with great difficulty that his Excellency collected himself. Then resuming his former rôle, he cried, with a sweep of the arm to embrace the fusileers in his denunciation: "Come, come! ye well know that ye seek my life!"

"No, your Excellency; let your life be your own — and your Maker's." And there was a shade of contempt in his tone, methought, ere he broke off impatiently: "Your Excellency well knows that I seek only my commission so long promised and deferred!"

At this, without a word — seeing it was an ill time for tricks, I opine — his Excellency turned squarely round on his heel and walked back to the state-house.

"Make ready, men! Present!" cried Bacon, followed by the levelling of their fusils at the frightened faces in the windows.

Instantly the faces vanished. Whilst a moment later a white kerchief was waved from the window and a voice rang out: "Wait, wait, Master Bacon! You shall have your commission."

"Damn my blood!" he cried, whilst the door was thrown open and he sprang into the room, closely followed by his fusileers; "I'll kill governor, Assembly, and all, ere I let myself be balked again in this matter!"

"Have patience, Master Bacon!" cried the

Speaker. "No one save the governor himself, the king's vicegerent, has power to grant the commission."

"Patience, sir, patience!" cried Bacon in a voice of thunder, whilst his eyes flashed fire. "Have the Indians patience, Master Speaker, whilst they go on killing as we keep up this farce?" And, his rich voice trembling with the grand and melancholy earnestness of a divine purpose, he continued to address the House with all that inspiration of impassioned oratory which he alone, of all the men of his day, was capable. Speaking now of the exorbitant taxes, the maladministration of publick revenues under Sir William Berkeley, and then closing with a rousing appeal to the manhood of all present, for protection against the red devils that were that very moment murdering the settlers on the frontier. Then, whilst we were under that same strain of intensity that had held us spellbound for full half an hour, he took his seat.

But with a shout — a shout that echoed and swelled, gathering volume as it went, beyond the James and far into the future, methinks, wherever liberty dwells — every man sprang to his feet; and, pressing round Master Bacon, we surged forward through the door leading into the council-chamber where his Excellency sat in deliberation with the Council.

"For God's sake, Master Bacon!" he cried,

snatching up a parchment roll that lay before him, whilst he jumped to his feet, his face white with fear and anger. "Here, take your commission!"

"Is it signed, sir?" asked Bacon, his voice calm and repressed, making no motion as yet to accept the roll.

Quickly the governor plumped himself down in his seat, a hot flush suffusing his pale face, whilst he nervously grasped a quill and writ his name on the parchment.

"Now," he snapped out without rising, as he held out the roll, "will you accept it, sir?"

Bowing with grave dignity as he took it in his hand, Master Bacon replied: "For the weal of Virginia, your Excellency, I accept."

Chapter X

The Flight from the Mansion

A GAIN Jamestown was swarming with people; the six hundred that had come with Master Bacon being quartered round the various ordinaries and tenting on the green. A martial spirit pervaded the town; men moving to the tap of the drum and responding to the call of the bugle. Whilst on every hand was heard naught but praise for the newly commissioned general-in-chief, and the resolute stand he had taken the day before.

Nor was he yet through with the governor and his Council; for among many measures for reform that were now begun, he insisted on a letter being drafted and sent to the king, exonerating himself and his followers from all blame in the events that had lately occurred. Howbeit, though his Excellency graciously signed the missive, purring contentedly as though he had fallen asleep beside this domestic fire, it was not till many days afterwards that we learned of another missive of his that travelled across the sea by the same packet, and in which he bemoaned his fate to the king, after having, he said, "governed for thirty years the most

prosperous country that ever the sun shone on, but that was now beset with rebellion."

The following night, as I was sitting by myself in the ordinary, Master Bacon entered with his arms loaded down with parchment rolls. "I prythee, my friend," he cried, letting them drop on the table beside me, "be so kind as to write a few names for me; for I note, Master Vivian, that you write a neat hand."

"With pleasure, sir; what shall it be first?" I asked.

"Beshrew my heart, sir," he answered with a laugh as he opened a roll, "methinks I'll have a captain first. Write your name in there, Captain Vivian, just above Sir William's."

And I did so with many thanks. Then, with not a little merriment, whilst he went on telling me of the pretty pleasantries he had exchanged with his Excellency in securing them, I kept on till I had filled thirty commissions altogether. The last one, I remember, bearing the name of his lieutenant-colonel, Giles Bland.

"Done!" he concluded with a laugh; "'the poor ye have always with ye'"; and he swept the commissions aside. Then in soberer mood he continued: "How oft have I heard his Excellency quote these very words whenever the people's demands have grown clamorous for an economic administration, extension of

the suffrage, or greater equality of opportunity for all! Zounds! for a man in high estate, or any other smug rascal, to thus find it possible to shield himself behind an old delusion of this sort, is enough to make one misdoubt the very book that gives it utterance. And mark my words, sir, every struggle for freedom on the part of a people has always been beset by some holy malediction of this species, used by a tyrannical few that they may continue to strap saddles upon the backs of the struggling many."

The next day the sun dawned on a Sunday, June the 25th, 1676,—a day that marked a turning-point in my life, as well as in that of Virginia and countless others. And so vivid it all returns to me at times that methinks it was scarce a week ago. A bright, beautiful day, the sun glinting joyously through the full green foliage, whilst above the tense monotone of a droning summer's morn, there rose the wild note of the thrush and the welling song of the wren as they flitted in and out betwixt the branches.

And then, rising above these confused and inopinate utterings of nature, sounded the bell in the church spire as it began tolling softly and calling the people to attend on divine worship. Almost, methought, for its note of courteous insinuation, as though it were the voice of Sir William, drowning the murmur of worldly complaint and beseeching his good

subjects to no longer adjudge him by what their eyes saw and their ears heard, but to put aside all wicked thoughts of stray publick revenues whilst they hearkened unto the voice of God. For aside from his own voice, there was no other that Sir William did so much delight in.

"Don't you know, my friend," cried Master Bacon, coming up behind me as I sat there in the yard of the ordinary, "that you are incurring his Excellency's displeasure by not obeying the call of the bell?"

"I was just wondering, sir," I replied drowsily, "if Sir William were ringing it."

"To all intents, aye," he answered with a laugh. "He likes all sinners to attend service, even to commanding it. Come, will you join me?"

And having little doubt that his Excellency considered me as unholy a rogue as any in all Jamestown, I arose and accepted.

Wending our way towards the little church, therefore, we arrived just in time to see the governor's chariot roll up before the high wooden horse-block and the footman descend to open the door. Whereupon the governor stepped out on to the block with a sprightly air and turned to assist his companions. First came Lady Frances, who frowned slightly and just lifted the tip of her proudish nose as Master Bacon courteously stepped forward and

offered her his hand. She had no way out of it, however, save to accept, the governor standing by the coach door as another lady stepped out whom I saw was Mistress Langdon.

And whereupon I knew not what to do, — save perchance to turn my head aside not to embarrass her, — as she now suddenly stood before me, looking as radiantly lovely, clad all in white again, as on that morning that I first beheld her. So that I must needs steal a furtive glance at her, when, lo! was I dreaming? — she gave me a pretty bow of recognition, and, smiling coyly as she advanced towards the stairs, gathered her skirts coquettishly in her right hand and extended her left towards me in naïve command of my attendance.

For a moment her hand rested firmly in mine as she descended the four or five rather precipitous stairs; and, short as the moment was, I yet had time to wonder and rejoice at the change that had come over her. Now she had learned, methought, the truth of my futile ride at her desire; or, seeing me standing there with Master Bacon, was proof sufficient of her mistake.

Bowing low to her courtesy as she stepped to the ground, my bonnet pressed to my heart, when next I looked up she was gone, following after Lady Frances; whilst Sir William, giving us both a formal greeting as he passed

between us, stepped airily along behind the ladies into the church.

“Aha, Master Vivian!” exclaimed my companion with a sly chuckle, “the little witch has relented, has she?” And looking at me comically, he added, “Come, man! don’t take it to heart like that, or you won’t be able to understand a word that good Master Clough has to say this morning.”

And it was even as he had said. For passing into the church and being shown to a pew, I sat there all through the service and naught can I record of what was said,—paying such scant heed to the preaching of the Word on that morning that I pray the good Lord has ere this forgiven me for it. I only remember that my eyes roved round the room after the inconsequential manner of a child; now following down the nave, that was crossed by the transept leading to a massive doorway on either side, to the cedar chancel that was panelled all around more than half-way to the groined ceiling; and again returning—the vagrant sinners!—they played for a moment over the communion table of black walnut, and then wandered away again over the quaint yellow letters painted on black canvas, the Creed and Commandments, framed in two tablets that hung above the communion table.

And in sooth it was a restful spot, such as did me good to behold; howbeit I have already

recorded that the day was drowsily inclined, so that, in whatsoever direction one chanced to look, the soft light falling on the eyelid was like a finger that would fain close it shut. Above the high-backed cedar pews, I could see naught but the waving of bonnets, and anon the well-trimmed and powdered peruke of some tall cavalier who, methought, might have once fought for the king at Marston Moor. Whilst all this time, high above in his cock-loft pit, Parson Clough was preaching away — alas ! far away — my wandering fancy full of the alluring picture of Mistress Langdon.

Yet I distinctly remember the moment he stopped speaking. And it may have been only this sudden hush that roused me, or, more likely, the hurrying footsteps of a travel-stained messenger as he sped past me down the aisle, and, followed by the eyes of all, hurried onward to the governor's pew.

Rising to his feet, his Excellency quickly read the message handed him, and passed it up for Parson Clough to read to the congregation.

Nor was any one dreaming now, whilst the parson proceeded to read how the Indians had broken out and the people being massacred along the York scarce twenty miles from Jamestown. Whence, the congregation being hurriedly dismissed that the people might repair to their homes and agree on plans for

defence, I passed out of the church and back to the ordinary with Master Bacon.

"You have heard the news, general?" asked Master Lawrence when we entered.

"Yes, at church," he replied abruptly.

"Then you stopped to confer with the governor, belike," said Lawrence.

"By heavens, no!" answered the general, with emphasis. "This matter belongs to the general of the army, and no meddling at the hands of the governor will longer be tolerated in such affairs."

Using the full power of his commission, therefore, the general and his officers were kept busy the balance of the day in provisioning the army, and collecting supplies of ammunition sufficient for a long campaign in the wilderness. And ere night fell we had made all arrangements for an early march on the following morn. Yet on this same Sunday—such devious ways hath destiny—whilst General Bacon was vigilantly preparing his army, looking to the everlasting welfare of Virginia, his father, Master Thomas Bacon of Fristan Hall, was standing humbly before the king and petitioning him not to be too hard upon his son till all the facts were known concerning his rebellion.

Quitting the encampment shortly after dark that same night, I crossed the green and was passing beneath the light of a cresset fixed in

front of the church, when I was accosted suddenly by a young negress.

She continued to peer cunningly into my face for a moment, ere my reply to her query assured her that I was Captain Vivian. But, hearing footsteps approaching, she quickly drew forth a folded piece of white paper which she placed in my hand and then darted away in the darkness.

Mystified at her manner, and in wonderment at the contents of the missive, I opened it then and there. But I could make out nothing by the flickering light; and so, quickening my pace, I went on to the ordinary.

Master Bacon was sitting at a table writing when I entered. "In good season, captain," he cried. "Here's more scribbling to be done."

"I prythee, sir, one moment," I begged, as I tilted my chair back against the table so as to get a good light from his candle. Then, again unfolding the missive, I read,—

"Sir: Prove, if it please you, that you can forget a mistake by escorting me to Curles to-night. Provide yourself with horses from Master Dale's and meet me at same hour and place as before."

No signature — no address! Nor did it require either, as the fore legs of my chair struck the floor with a smart report as I arose, a glad cry of joy at my heart, and began pacing slowly

up and down distrait for aught save her. Forget her mistake? forsooth! and I smiled to think how I had already forgotten everything; everything save the gray eyes and the soul behind them that had followed the penning of this dear little billet. That, and the joy of the ride to Curles — with her!

Suddenly, however, — and I stopped short in my tracks, — the thought came to me that I was no longer my own master. For weeks past I had been free to act as I willed, but now, I remembered, I was a regularly commissioned officer in the army of Virginia. An hour ago, and no one was more ready for the service than I. And here at the table sat the general, busily writing and forming his plans ere the army marched on the morrow, and depending on me in all confidence to bear my part and lend the willing hand that I had always promised.

“The devil!” I exclaimed impatiently as I bethought myself of my position; “why ’tis that everything happens either too soon or too late for me in this uncertain country is a thing to marvel at!”

“How now,” he asked, looking up from his writing with a smile; “has she heard you are off to the wars, and would make peace with her conscience ere you depart?”

“Nay, read this,” said I, placing the note before him. “I fear me she is in trouble.”

"Zounds! and she wishes to go to Curles?" he exclaimed hastily. "You may depend upon it, Vivian, that something beyond common tempts her to take this step. That old tyrant, her uncle, belike has vented his spleen upon her till she can no longer remain under his roof."

"But surely, sir, he will not allow her to depart?"

"No, no, you little reck the old man's pride if you hope that," he answered. "To have it bruited among the people that his own niece was forced to flee from his wrath and seek refuge under the roof of General Bacon would be a bitter pill for him to swallow."

"But her message, sir?" I asked impatiently, as he paused for a moment.

"Aye, I am considering it," said he quietly. "How came you by it?"

I told him briefly.

"And did any one see her hand it you?"

"In sooth, sir, I know not," I answered, regretting now my heedlessness in unfolding it beneath the glare of the church cresset.

"That is unfortunate," said he, as I related the circumstance; "the wench may have been watched and followed. What hour is named?"

"Nine o'clock, sir," said I, readily recalling the hour of our first meeting.

"Then meet her as she desires," said he, "and let me tell you, my friend, to lose no

time in getting out of Jamestown when once you have her safely mounted in the saddle. It will be Wednesday night before the army reaches West Point, so if it please you, you may remain at Curles till the same morning. Then by taking a path due north through the woods east of Shirley for a dozen miles, thence bearing eastward by following the course of a deer-run through the laurel, you should be able to reach West Point about the time of our own arrival."

Thanking him, and fixing his directions carefully in my mind, I arose to depart.

"Stay, captain," he added; "you had better take a couple of men with you, for a ride in the night is not without its uncertainties nowadays. And let me warn you again," he continued smiling, as I lifted my sword from the table, "to fight shy of his Excellency. He is absolute lord of the manor, power of infangthef and all. So that my friendship would be of little service to you if captured. Hence, take the retreat, I say, if discovered, and wait a more favourable time."

Promising to be cautious, therefore, and bearing a message from him to his mistress, I took my leave.

Thence repacing my way to the encampment, I made arrangements for the Henrys to accompany me, telling them to wait me in the saddle at a point in front of the church;

whereon I proceeded to Master Dale's. Coming presently beneath the light of his lanthorn swinging in the doorway, I gave a quick rap with my hilt against the door. And as he appeared, — taller, lankier, more bushy-whiskered, if possible, than ever, — I bethought myself with an amused smile of his obstinate humour the night of our first meeting.

"The dapple-gray, and a side-saddle on the bay hunter, Master Dale, if it please you," I cried.

"Aye, sir, it does," he answered heartily, "and fasten the girths myself."

Nor had I any need to advise him who was to ride in that saddle, whilst he hitched it a little now this way, now that, till it rightly suited his sense of proportion between ease and security. So that some little time passed ere he finally held my stirrup for me and allowed me to depart between great good-nature at his kindness and impatience at his delay.

For the hour was growing late, and, recalling Master Bacon's fear that my messenger had been spied upon, I had still to make a far detour to the north of the mansion, lest by riding boldly past with my led horse, I should perchance encounter a guard and confirm a suspicion of my intent. So, taking a roundabout course, I came at length to a narrow pathway leading into the woods north

of the mansion. Yet here I must needs dismount because of the low-lying branches, and pick my way carefully along ere I came to the clearing round the north gate.

But I saw no sign of Mistress Langdon. And at once I became apprehensive lest she had come, and, disappointed at my failance, returned again to the mansion. As my eyes grew accustomed to the darkness, I again traced the dim outline of the gravel walk down to where it approached the north portico. A light shone through the transom, and where it fell across the walk I observed a figure pass. Keeping my eyes fixed steadily on this spot, after a few minutes the figure passed again, pacing slowly, and going in the same direction as before. Whereat I concluded that a guard was doing duty, circling the mansion in his beat.

Seeing this, I tethered my horses a piece back from the gate, and went on to reconnoitre round the mansion. Keeping close beside the walk, I advanced to within fifty paces of the building. At this point I discerned a dim light streaking out from a window over the verandah. Then, passing round the corner, where the light fell athwart the walk a few yards distant, I observed two figures standing. Scarce had I reached, however, the shelter of a low-branching tree where I ran no risk of discovery, than my horses became impatient.

A long, dubious neigh the one gave, followed a second later by the sociable response of the other. And as though pleased with their own conversation, they must needs repeat it again ere they were satisfied.

"Hush!" I heard one of the voices say distinctly. And moving slightly in my direction, to a point where the light fell full upon him, I saw that one of the men was no other than Sir William himself. Listening a moment, he added quickly, "Call the guard!"

Whereupon I waited no longer, but set off at a trot across the velvety sward, back through the gate, and beyond to where my nags were tethered. And leading them outwards a piece, I mounted hastily, and rode off down the highway directly past the mansion at a rattling gallop. A voice shouted at me from the yard; and glancing up at the window whence the light came, I noted the curtain drawn slightly aside, and a face peeping out for an instant as I flew past.

Going on to the church where I found my men waiting me, I remained with them, despite my impatience, a full hour by the clock in the spire. By this time, I hoped, his Excellency and the guard had retired, believing I had been driven to give up my quest for the night. Wherefore turning to my men finally, I said: "Come; follow me at a short distance, one behind the other."

Riding slowly, and bearing well over on the soft turf fringing the highway so that the foot-fall of our nags should make no sound, I again came in front of the premises. This time, however, seeing that all was quiet about the place, I reined up before the main gate, which was some two hundred yards from the mansion. Then, gathering the horses in the shadow of a thick shrubbery growing beside the gate, I dismounted, telling one of the men to stand at their heads and keep them quieted whilst the other should come with me.

"I'll come, sir," cried the younger eagerly, springing forward ere his brother could answer.

"Hist! not so loud," said I softly. And waiting a moment to be sure no one was stirring about the place, I added, "Come, but step carefully."

Passing through the gateway, with its massive stone pillars standing like sentinels on either side, we advanced to within a few yards of the mansion. Over the verandah, the light was still streaming out from a long, low window, and slanting in a narrow line across the lawn, whilst from the south side of the house I now discerned another and paler light that I had not hitherto noticed, and whose source I resolved to learn before venturing any farther. I therefore continued cautiously round the corner of the mansion, to a point close beside

the latticed window that stood somewhat high above the ground.

Peering through the lattice, I noticed a lantern flickering dimly on a table in the centre of an oak-panelled room, on two sides of which were great shelves of books reaching from the polished floor to the ceiling. Sheets of manuscript, scattered confusedly as though after a battle, were lying about on the table; whilst drawn close up, was a low chair with a lofty back, tilted at a restful angle and luxuriously upholstered with yielding cushions of leather richly stamped in black and gold. And in this chair, blinking and yawning and now drowsing off for a bit, sat the learned savant, Master Seager!

I opined, however, from prior knowledge of his habits, that the manuscript lying there was scarcely the travail of his pregnant intellect; but that Sir William,—in the arrogant midnight of his life,—having been frittering the late hours of the day over some idle frippery of a play, had retired to rest, leaving his library in some disorder, and his household to the watchful eye of Master Seager. So that I could not refrain from smiling as I gazed upon the fellow sitting there in such unholy comfort, his legs stretched straight out before him and his boot heels digging deeply into the soft rug beneath the table, the while his occiput rested luxuriously in the soft nest it had bored into

the downy head-cushion. Suchwise, I saw, had the rascal profited by his duplicity.

Ere this, however, I had concluded that the light in front shone from Mistress Langdon's chamber. And, wishing Master Seager a sound repose, I turned quietly away and began to make search for some means of scaling the verandah. But for a space I searched vainly, until, passing in the rear of the servants' quarters and finding myself presently in the orchard, I at length discovered a ladder leaning against a tree. This I eagerly seized upon, yet at the very moment that I lifted it, rejoicing at its discovery, a great bucket came tumbling down from the top, hitting, it seemed to me, each particular rung in its descent, and landing with a loud crash at my feet.

Then for a space I stood there, cursing my luck, and fearing that I had again aroused the house by some untoward circumstance. And may no one who haps to peruse these memoirs ever accuse me of being a favourite of fortune in any of these adventures, wherein, whenever I came out best, it was only by virtue of a strong arm and the grace of Providence. However, after listening intently and hearing no one stirring, I again seized hold of the ladder and swung it clear of the branches. Thence passing round to the front of the mansion and finding Henry in waiting, we placed it carefully against the verandah and found,

with infinite satisfaction, that it easily reached the height of the low railing above.

"Stand here, lad," I whispered, "and if any one be foolish enough to come, deal with him quickly ere he can raise an outcry!"

Leaving him standing there at the foot with his sword drawn, I ascended the ladder lightly and stepped over the railing without a mishap. Now, however, as I began moving towards the window, the narrow boards beneath me, with their sun-warped edges, snapped when I put my boot down and creaked again as I lifted it. So that after each stealthy step I must needs pause for a moment and listen in great alarm. And so it happened that, before I could reach the window, the curtain was drawn suddenly aside and she whom I sought stood revealed.

She started back in surprise. Recovering quickly, however, and holding her finger to her lips warningly, she whispered, "Hush! One moment, sir."

And as though to prove that I was not the only one who had long been kept waiting when ready to depart, she had returned in a trice. Looping the curtain aside and placing one foot on the sill, she took the hand I held towards her and stepped lightly down beside me.

God bless her! Shall I ever forget the way she appeared that night? Looking for all the world in her trim riding-habit—with flapping hat of white fur cocked jauntily on her head,

and the erstwhile carefully tucked-up hair falling in a wavy mass over her shoulders and secured into a queue with a streaming scarlet riband — like some sweet-faced lad, methought, out for an innocent lark.

“Come,” I said softly, holding her hand in mine as we moved towards the ladder, “I have a man waiting below. You need have no fear.”

Gathering her long skirt closely round her, she descended whilst I held the ladder secure at the top. And feeling its impulse as she reached the ground, I followed rapidly after her.

“Quick, Henry!” said I. “Never mind the ladder, but get to the horses.” But in stepping over the railing one of my spurs had caught and bent below my heel, so that I could scarce go on for its ploughing a great hole in the turf with every stride. However, we hurried along beside the walk until we were within a few paces of the gate. Then seeing that all was still quiet, I told Henry to go on and see my lady safely mounted whilst I stopped a moment to adjust my spur.

So, bending to the ground on one knee, I caught hold of the shank, and with no little difficulty effected to bend it back again to its proper form, and was then about to rise and go on, when I suddenly became aware of a shadow falling in front of me. Dodging instinctively, ere I could rise or look up I was

well-nigh undone by a blow squarely aimed, but glancing off from the side of my head to my shoulder, that received the full brunt of it.

But before my assailant had time to recover and strike again,—for he had come up suddenly and struck with his sheathed sword,—I was on my feet. Whipping my sword out just in time to parry a thrust, I saw at once by the light that streamed over the lawn, that my time had now come in good earnest for a swift reckoning with Master Seager.

“You coward! you lying rascal!” I exclaimed, dashing the blood out of my eyes, and casting my cloak aside with the same movement. “Now I shall teach you to meddle with the affairs of honest men!”

“Honest men,” he sneered, closely parrying my savage play, “don’t prowl round gentlemen’s houses with ladders late at night.”

“Sometimes they do, sirrah,” said I, with a grim chuckle, “and steal a lady to boot!”

At this reply, knowing without a doubt that I had outwitted him, his anger ran high, and his play became more savage and rapid than my own. So that, bethinking myself quickly for what I was fighting, and seeing her ever in my mind’s eye as she waited, mounted and ready for the ride but for me, I at once became calmer, more prudent, more wary. My arm became suddenly nerved like steel, and my wrist, methinks, was never so firm or so supple.

Nor did his feints and his tricks catch me lunging forward to the death, as he hoped; whilst I parried, closely and skilfully, yet never ashamed to take the retreat when in doubt.

The light from the open window, with its curtain looped back as she had left it, cast but a faint glow over the spot where we were standing. Yet it was only a moment ere Master Henry, hearing the clash of our swords, came running up with drawn sword, and a lighted lanthorn.

“Stand back, Henry!” I cried; “but hold the lanthorn, and give the knave a fair fight.”

A lunge, rispost, parry, and counter-rispost, over and over in quick succession, whilst our rapiers took on a more sinister click, and the rapid play was beginning to tell on Master Seager. Being trained in the same school, and of about the same age and physique, there was little advantage apparent to either at first. But if he never had cause to rue his loose habits before, he surely had now. He began to breathe heavily, his eyes to start and roll hopelessly, whilst his lips made as though they would fain cry out for assistance had I not kept him busy with my point. It was he who took the retreating step now, yet still with a watchful eye to parry my thrust in the chase.

But he knew, the villain! that his time had come. And somewhat he must have felt of

the fearsome sting of an inglorious death, else he would not have tried that trick upon me that could not advantage him once in a hundred times. Responding to his feint, as I lunged, he gave a wild yell and sprang suddenly aside, as much in hope of disconcerting me as, mayhap, to summon aid to his back. But I knew the trick, having once seen it achieved by an Italian at Mühlhausen; so that, catching him before his recovery, ere he could fub me again, my rapier flashed and thrust home.

He fell with a curse at my feet, just as a number of his comrades of the guard came rushing to the spot.

"To your mount, man!" I cried to Henry, standing there stoutly at my side. "To your mount and away!"



“My rapier flashed and thrust home.” — Page 190.

Chapter XI

A Crown of Laurel

WE were into the saddle and off at a gallop down the road, just as the roll of a drum behind us gave warning that the guard at the mansion was being called. But we had a fair start; and though the night enveloped us in its dark folds and made the road nearly impossible to outline at first, there was a bond of sympathy between us, that caused every ringing footfall of our horses to sound a bold freedom in my ears and an exaltation with every wild pulse of my heart. Nor was this spirit repressed by the snatches of sentences that she let fall as we flew on, as though in maidenly explanation of the course she had been compelled to take at the last moment. When, finding that her uncle was bent on plans that would serve only to widen the breach between himself and the army, she had — after exerting the most strenuous efforts to turn him in his will — loyally decided upon casting her lot with her friends, and quitting his roof forever.

I had paid little heed to the blow on my head given me by Seager. But now, as we came out in the glare of a lanthorn hanging in

front of a tavern at Sandy Beach, I was startled by my lady's crying out: "Why, sir, you are injured!" And ere I could protest that it was of little concern, she had whipped out her kerchief and reined her horse close to my side.

"'Tis an ugly wound, Master Vivian," she said, her hand resting so lightly on my forehead for a moment that the dull ache was quickly forgotten; "surely, sir, this is no sword cut?"

"A scabbard, my lady, I think it was," said I, remembering how Seager had rushed at me whilst I was kneeling on the ground, and my shoulder still paining me where it had received the brunt of the blow as it glanced off.

"Quick!" she cried, turning to one of the lads riding behind us, "dip this kerchief in the water and hand it me."

We were standing then on the little neck of sand where the water reached almost to the feet of our nags. So it was but a moment's space ere the kerchief was returned and bound, cool and moist, round my aching head. Thence proceeding at a leisurely gait, we had passed beyond the peninsula, and were within a few miles of Green Springs ere anything served to advise us that we were being pursued. Now, however, we could hear galloping footsteps on the gravelly road behind us. Bringing my little party to a sudden halt, I listened intently. Aye, I could misdoubt it no longer. A party of

horse was rapidly overtaking us. For a moment I knew not what to do. To our right the forest lay, dense and impenetrable, wrapped in the midnight gloom; yet on our left, reaching almost to the edge of the road, was a field of corn, shoulder high, rustling eerily in the night's damp air. Knowing it would be foolhardy to attempt to outride our followers, I had about decided to scatter our little party into the corn, when my lady willed otherwise.

"Come, sir," she said impatiently, "ride straight on. We are within a quarter of a mile of Green Springs."

"But what then," I objected, my horse starting after hers involuntarily; "we can expect but scant welcome there, methinks?"

"No matter," she answered, the bay hunter stretching himself into a long canter, my own nag close at his side, "we shall outwit them. They will never dream of our stopping there."

And, giving our horses a free rein, we pressed on, the Henrys close in our rear. Down the dark vista, narrowing into a dim curtain far ahead, which was suddenly raised and mysteriously lowered again far beyond as we flew on. We heard no sound of the midnight's life, naught but the ring of our horses' hoofs on the firm road beneath us; and far away, but drawing no nearer now that we were in full flight, the rhythmic sound of the rise and fall, rise

and fall, of the horse of the governor's guard behind us.

The mansion at Green Springs, the country seat of his Excellency, now loomed before us. But as we slackened our speed to turn in at the gateway, I was startled by the nearing footfalls behind us. Surely, methought, they would note the stop of our nags! Hence before turning in at the gate, I checked my horse and allowed my men to come abreast with me.

"Keep straight ahead, lads," I said hastily, "and let them follow and pass you half a mile beyond. They will ask if you have seen a party pass with a lady, belike, and do you answer them, 'Yes.' When they have gone on down the road, bring your nags about and return here."

Scarce drawing rein, my men went on past the gate whilst I turned in towards the mansion after Mistress Langdon. Walking our horses, we went on round the side of the building, keeping in the shadow of the wall and making as carefully as possible not to arouse the servants. Here we waited a few minutes, fascinated by the clasp of the swiftly advancing horse. But as they came on I grew fearful lest our horses should neigh and discover us to them. Quickly dismounting, therefore, I held my cloak spread out before their eyes, whilst the guard came on with clangous clatter of scabbard and spur; but ah! sweeping rapidly

by — a dozen or more, following after my two lads, whose horses' footsteps were now almost beyond hearing.

"A clever ruse, Captain Vivian," spoke up my lady. "But come, sir, we cannot get to Curles now, for the road will be guarded till morning. Do you hold my horse while I arouse the house."

"Do you mean to lie the night here, my lady?" I asked in some surprise.

"Certainly," she answered, springing out of the saddle and beginning to ascend the porch. She had reached the top stair when, my query having evidently stirred some sudden recollection of her present position in the governor's family, she turned about, saying wistfully, "It has been my home, sir, here and at Jamestown, ever since I can remember."

And though I would have given worlds to reassure her, I could do naught but bow my acceptance of her meaning.

For a moment she waited in silent meditation. Then, walking quickly to the door, she lifted the massive knocker whose summons now echoed and reëchoed down the hall. In a short time a light appeared, shining through the narrow latticed panes of stained glass on either side of the door.

"It is I, aunty," cried Mistress Langdon, as the light shone nearer and then stood still. "May I come in?"

"Lawd sabe us, honey!" I could hear a hoarse voice call out ere the bolt was drawn. Then as the door was thrown wide open, a portly negress with a queerish white night-cap enveloping all save a motherly old face, quickly caught the girl in her arms, laughing and crying in quick alternation over the sweet face buried for a moment in her matronly bosom.

There were tears glistening in my lady's eyes as she looked up, I remember. But, laughing shamefacedly as she dashed them away, she said: "It is nothing, aunty. I am riding to Curles, and will stay with you till morning."

"Ridin' to Curles, honey!" she cried in surprise. "At dis hyar time o' night—an' alone?"

"No, aunty," replied my lady, "I am not alone. Call Mose to come and care for the horses." And whilst I stood holding the horses just in front of the porch, she gave me a pretty smile of assurance from the doorway and a low "Good-night, Captain Vivian; aunty will see to making you and your men comfortable for the night."

A negro presently came round the corner of the mansion and took the bridles. Telling him that there would be two more horses to stable when my men arrived, I walked down towards the gate to await them. But it was some time, I remember, and I had begun to fear they had

been arrested, ere I heard the sound of their horses galloping up the road towards me.

"Were you detained, lads?" I asked.

"A short time, captain," replied the elder. "They swore roundly when they found we were alone."

"But they kept straight on, I suppose?" I asked eagerly.

"Oh, yes, sir," he answered, "after a brief halt; but they were desirous of pressing us into their company to show them the way, only," he added dryly, "our nags could not travel fast enough for his Excellency's service, so they were fain to go on and leave us."

Returning to the stables, I presented a tester to Mose for his work on our nags, and told him that I wished him to watch the road till morning. If a party of horse should pass going towards Jamestown, he was to let me know. Whereat, feeling sure that he could be depended upon, I returned to the mansion with the Henrys, and, being shown to our rooms by the negress, retired for the night.

Howbeit, when I awoke the following morning, I could scarce collect my wits for the raging pain in my head. Raising my hand, I felt the kerchief that Mistress Langdon had bound there. It was stiff and hard from the oozing of blood, and when I started to rise to my feet I felt so sick and dizzy for a spell, that I must needs lie down again. Waiting a space, and watching

the sunlight streaming through a gap in the curtains showing that the morn was well advanced, I again essayed to do battle with my own weakness, and this time was more successful. For by the time I had bathed and clad myself the sharp pain was gone, leaving only a dull ache as I descended the stairs to the rooms below.

I was not to pass muster with my lady, however, without a word. Bidding me a good-morning as I stepped into the hall, she said, looking at her kerchief which I had freshened and again bound to my head: "You did not rest well, Captain Vivian. It is your wound, perhaps?"

I thanked her hastily. "In very truth, my lady, my rest was unbroken"—which was a fact.

She looked at me askant, but such was my eagerness to assist her safely to her journey's end, I betrayed no weakness at her inspection.

"Then come, sir," she said finally, as though satisfied, "breakfast is waiting."

I was about to order the horses fetched round after breakfast, when Mose appeared, saying that he had seen no party go by towards Jamestown.

"Let us be leaving then, sir, at once," said my lady; "for they are sure to return here when they learn I am not at Curles."

"But whither now, my lady?" I asked, bewildered what route to take; knowing there

was only one road leading either back to Jamestown or on to Curles, equally to be shunned.

"There is a road," she said thoughtfully, "across the river." And reflecting a moment, she turned to the negro who stood waiting our decision, and asked, "Mose, is the lighter at the pier?"

Receiving a quick affirmative, she turned to me. "Then we will cross on the lighter, sir, and take the road by the south shore."

And though I knew naught of the road on the other side, I yielded to my lady—as I fear I should have done anyway. I conjectured, however, that the distance would be considerably farther by that route, and was somewhat apprehensive lest we should be unable to get beyond the mouth of the Appomattox, where it widened out opposite Shirley, without making a far detour to the southward. Albeit I remembered that it would be three full days yet ere I was to report to General Bacon at West Point. Accordingly, when a little negress came round the house lugging a huge basket of provender that had been prepared for us, I at once dropped all thought of Master Bacon and the army and entered properly into the present occasion.

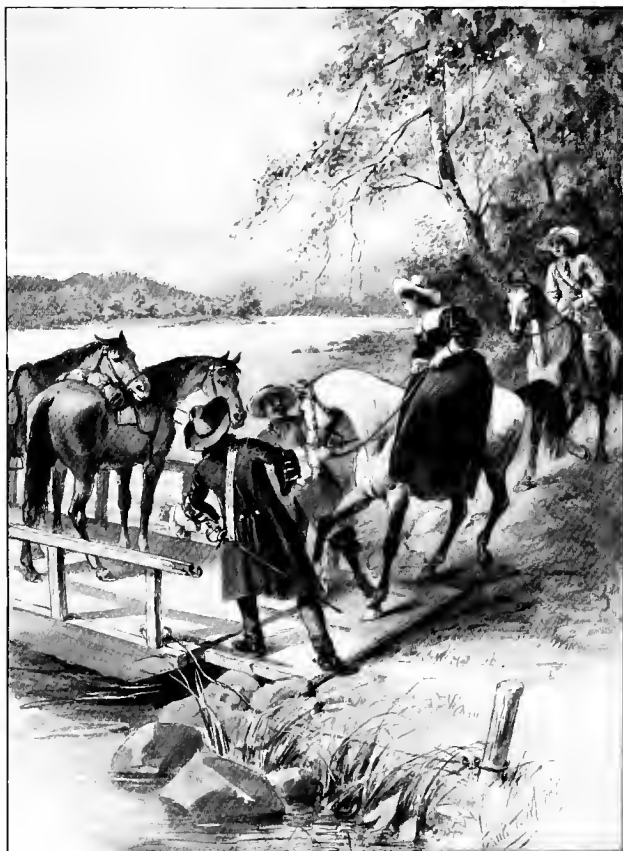
"May we take Mose along, aunty?" asked Mistress Langdon. And turning to me, she added in explanation, "He knows the way of the woods, Captain Vivian."

I bowed my acknowledgment of the wisdom of Moses.

"Yas, missy," answered the negress, "dat thyar niggah am too wuthless to be alibe. He am no good to de guberner's plantation nohow. Take him 'long!"

Mose paid scarce any heed to the sounding of his praises, however, but was off to the stables with a glad yell, presently returning with our horses in readiness and himself, with an axe over his shoulder, astride of a gray mule. Whereupon I helped my lady to mount, and with a "Good-by, aunty," that echoed back a hearty "God bless you, honey," we were off down the narrow lane leading to the river.

It was my first ride over a grandee's plantation. The estate comprised full a thousand acres, sweeping nobly from the road down to the beautiful James. To my right stretched a broad field of that staple, tobacco, which has come to be held in such goodly favour by men of all classes whom it has enslaved. And though I scarce can think that its habit has ever caused idiocy, despite the bitter contention between its enemies and habitués, yet in the cultivation and distribution of this crop there has been much madness of spirit displayed. Whereas it has grown to be the standard of value here in Virginia for all else, even unto the preaching of the Word of God ; our every clergyman receiv-



“It was no little task to urge our horses to venture on board.” — Page 201.

ing sixteen thousand pounds of tobacco yearly in requital for the grace that his eloquence has extended over the colony. And—though I run ahead of my discourse—when it was purposed to establish our college for the training of the youth of Virginia unto the ways of divinity and other godly services, it was tobacco that was to gild the way thereto. Howbeit, when the time came for the fulfilment of this project, much dispute rose up between the people and the representatives of the crown who wished to apply the tobacco otherwise. “Sir,” urged the Reverend James Blair, Commissary of the Colonial Church, before Attorney-General Seymour, “the people of Virginia have souls to be saved as well as the people of England.”

“Souls!” shouted Master Seymour, “damn your souls! Make tobacco!”

We presently arrived at the pier where the lighter lay. This being a large scow, with flat deck, used for conveying tobacco from the plantation to the vessels lying at Jamestown. A low railing ran around the deck, and from the stern dangled a huge sweep or oar, which served the double purpose of a rudder when drifting heavily-laden down the stream, and as a scull when returning up stream to the pier. It was no little task, however, to urge our horses to venture on board. The bay hunter, especially, who would walk warily along to nigh the edge

of the pier, lifting his feet high as though he feared they were to be caught in a trap, then turn with a snort and break away up the lane with a bound. So that, despite her trained hand, my lady was forced to dismount and turn the nag over to my men. Then by dint of much urging and tugging, and, I fear me, a little swearing, the hunter was finally made to take his chances at sea with the balance of us.

The painter being now cast off, Mose took a long pole, and pushed the craft well out into the stream. Seizing hold of the scull, which he worked slowly back and forth, we were soon ferried to the south shore, where, after making the lighter fast to a stout birch near the bank, our gang-plank was run out and we were presently safely landed and ready to proceed on our way to Curles.

Taking the road that lay along the river, we went on to the westward, till, coming to where the bank fell off in a sandy slope, we were forced to stop and take counsel with ourselves. The road itself had strangely disappeared. Standing on this sandy point, it was as though the James had become suddenly divided, one branch going straight on to the westward, whilst another fully as large coursed through a tangled mass of birch and willow to the southward. Seeing perforce that there was no other way than to follow this latter, we re-

luctantly reined to the left and picked our way slowly onwards through the primeval forest. At places we were forced to halt for some little time, whilst Mose set to work with his axe and cleared a space through the dense brush sufficient for our horses to break their way.

It was on one of these halts, some time after the hour of noon, that my lady first made known to me her anxiety over the uncertainty of our way. "Sir," she said petulantly, "I fear me that you have mistaken the road."

"The road, my lady?" I asked, bewildered as much by her manner of asking as by the utter absence of any well-defined highway since landing on the south shore.

"Yes," she replied impatiently, her face flushed from the heat of the ride and glowing somewhat warmer as she spoke, "I said the road, Captain Vivian."

I bowed my acknowledgment of hearing her words, albeit, the air being warmish, I prudently held my tongue.

After a short interval she again spoke, as the sound of the axe began to grow feeble and then stop altogether. "Are we to go on cutting our way through the woods, sir, all the way to Curles?"

Now, it being her own choosing, I remember that I thought it a question that she could answer easier than I, who was a stranger to these parts, whilst she had been over this same

course on previous occasions. Yet I could only answer, "Surely, my lady, I hope not."

"Say rather, Captain Vivian," she rejoined sarcastically, "that you know not — or mayhap care not!"

"Nay, Mistress Langdon!" I exclaimed eagerly, the quick injustice of her words forcing me to reply more as I felt; "it is my one desire to escort you to Curles as safely and as quickly as possible."

"As quickly, sir?" she asked, though not in displeasure, as I had half expected. And, unless my eyes deceived me, I fancied that I saw a smile chase across her features, which was quickly banished, however, as she added, "But come, let us dismount and spread our lunch; perchance it will mend your temper, sir."

And as we all gathered round a cleared space beneath a tall pine, and partook of the dainty viands prepared for us by the housekeeper at Green Springs, it was impossible for me to long feel aggrieved at the flash of asperity my lady had shown towards me. But, though she took every pains to propitiate me, I had eyes to see forsooth that she treated us all with the same charm of manner, and that to my men — yea, even to Moses — she displayed the same sweet unreservedness that she was wont to manifest towards me. However admirable to observe this freedom of manner doubtless

was, therefore, yet was I strangely conscious because of it of a barrier between us that seemed well-nigh insurmountable. Rich and handsome and courted as I knew she had been by many a cavalier's son in Virginia, what had I, a soldier of fortune, that I could ever dare offer her in obedience to the wish of my heart?

Our horses being presently made ready again, we mounted and rode on through the pathway that Mose had cut, and were soon pleased to emerge into a clearing extending for several miles. So that I hoped all difficulties in making our way on to Curles were now left behind. A forest fire had swept over the ground, leaving naught but the charred earth and blackened stumps far as the eye could reach. And as the sun had now begun to drop in the west, we quickened the pace of our horses into a hand gallop, and had successfully covered a good half of the distance to Curles when we came suddenly out of the burnt forest to a point where the land began to descend. Standing upon the eminence which we had now reached, we looked away to the westward over a vast green sea extending to meet the horizon, and bordered far to the north and south by a fringe of the olden forest.

"The laurel!" cried my lady. "Is it not beautiful?"

"In good sooth, my lady," I replied, my eyes resting on a little island of pine rising out of the midst of the green laurel, then glancing away in search of some vulnerable point to penetrate. "But," and I hesitated, "I doubt we shall ever cross it."

For a moment she made no reply, as a sudden fear chased the beauty of the scene away from her face. Till suddenly, with a gleeful laugh she exclaimed, looking into my face, "Why, sir, there is Moses, you know!"

"Yes," I admitted, albeit with an incredulous smile at the mention of Moses, "though it is writ, my lady, that that was a red sea."

With a merry laugh at me, she answered, "Well, at any rate, sir, Moses can do no less than try his power." And, galloping down the slope, we went on a matter of a quarter of a mile to the edge of the laurel. At this time none of us, save Mose and Mistress Langdon perhaps, knew of the almost absolute impenetrability of the laurel. Growing from waist to shoulder high, it seemed—save for its rose-red blossom—like some tough coil of gnarled roots of the devil's own get up rather than like anything deserving the glory of such a name. For a space, therefore, we rode up and down the edge of the brake, seeking the course of a deer-run which we might follow through it. For aside from the deer,—and the bear with its monstrous weight,—there is scarce an

animal of the forest able to penetrate its meshes.

Failing to find any pathway, however, and the day drawing rapidly to a close, we dismounted and followed after Mose, who had his axe slung over his shoulder; leaving one of the men to stay with Mistress Langdon and watch the horses till our return. Then striking into the laurel and making for the little island of pine straight ahead, the way seemed so easy at first that we became scattered, each striving to find a path by which our party could be safely conducted. So, going on by myself a matter of a quarter-mile, I all at once came to a place where the laurel seemed to take on a ranker growth, the leaves became greener, and the branches thicker and more tangled and gnarly. Beneath my feet the ground sank away and oozed like a sponge, and, as I made to go ahead, a great root wound itself tightly about my ankle, wherefore I must needs bend nearly double and finally resort to my scabbard to pry the knot of laurel wide open, ere I could disengage my foot and be free.

Rising to my feet again, I beheld with dismay that the laurel was now even with the top of my head. Bethinking myself, therefore, that I had become turned round when kneeling and struggling to disengage my foot, I again tried to find the little island of pine that I might shape my course accordingly. Lo!

as I looked, I now saw two clusters of pine, the tops plainly visible, but their trunks hardly to be seen, so tall was the laurel about me. I grew on the instant bewildered. Stories that I had heard of men becoming lost in the laurel now recurred to me with all their force. So that I began to scramble hurriedly to get out. But I was in a pit, it seemed. Whichever way I turned the ground sloped lower and lower, and the laurel grew ranker, taller, and more tenacious in its clinging. Thrice now had I been forced to kneel and struggle painfully to release my feet. On one of these occasions the bandage about my head became caught in a branch and torn loose, so that I now felt a sudden welling up and pulsation of the wound. This was instantly followed, as I rose to my feet, by a burst of blood trickling down over my eyes and half blinding me as on the night before. A sudden sickness came over me. Dusk was falling rapidly now. Or was it my eyes, blind and faint from loss of blood? Then it was that I felt a sensation unknown to me since early boyhood. Terror! A mad, blind fear; as of battling in one's sleep with some strange and all-powerful foe. Again I had become entangled, and the more I struggled the fainter and weaker I became. A thousand serpents seemed coiled about my limbs, and round my neck one great tough coil held me fast as in a vise. I was so affrighted now,

and so weak from loss of blood, that I could scarce muster up strength to cry out roundly, Help! Ho, there! and, disengaging myself once more, I scrambled on till I fell in a swoon on the bank of the little pine island.

Here, I still remember, I seemed to lie in a long dream. My head ached miserably, and for a time I fancied myself sleeping upon the gnarly tops of the laurel whose knots sunk deep into my back, and which swayed back and forth frightfully when I turned; till, dropping me suddenly from their support, I began to fall down — down — slowly at first, then faster and faster, till I seemed to wake, and the jolting and swaying would again be resumed. And the thirst! heavens! was there no water to be had in this cursed wilderness? Water! water! water! I would cry, and lo! almost as though by magic the cry would bring its relief. Hence all through the night, resting on sticks and dying of thirst, I seemed to pass on to a morn that brought restful sleep at last. Again I was sleeping the tired repose of a soldier, after a hard-fought battle in the valley of the Elsenz. A short sleep, at best, the drums never seeming to pause in their rolling in a country where Turenne does battle. No sleep for Turenne, they roll. No, nor for his army, nor the harassed troops of the Imperialists now well-nigh cut to pieces. Heavens! how the boat rolls and plunges forward into the sea! A stormy

passage, Master Barton, in good sooth; and that rogue of a Seager, leering ever at me as the deck rises and falls. "How now, you villain! what would you here?" And again I stand there thrusting and parrying in the light that shines forth from the mansion, until he attempts that trick of his that redounds to my own advantage as my point finds him. Then, for a space, I lay sleeping peacefully at Green Springs till a voice that I love asked, as I half opened my eyes, —

"Well, sir; will you go on sleeping all your life, Captain Vivian?"

Chapter XII

Colonel Ludwell catches a Tartar

FOR a space I could not realize what had happened; whereat I again closed my eyes, and began to muse over the events of the day before, when, feeling a cool hand on my forehead, I looked up, and there was my lady standing beside my couch, smiling down on me archly as was her wont. Then, my eyes following her every movement, she stepped lightly to the window and looped back the curtain; so that, after my eyes had felt a first blinding flash, I saw that I was once more in the room at Green Springs where I had slept the night before.

"How is this, my lady?" I asked, in a perplexity which was in no manner relieved by the strange sound of my own voice, and the weakness that I felt as I essayed to rise on my elbow.

"Hush, sir!" she commanded, tripping back to me with her finger to her lips. "You will know presently."

And I was well content to drop off again into a quiet sleep, and to catch the story at frequent intervals from her own lips of how, my wound having broken out afresh and fever setting in, our party had returned to Green Springs,

where I had lain for nigh three weeks in a state of delirium and extreme prostration. Naught but the sedulous attention manifested towards me by my men in bringing me carefully back to Green Springs, followed by the gentle ministration afterwards of my lady — she having that instinctive knowledge of medicinal herbs that was not uncommon among Virginia ladies, and oft pursued as an elegant accomplishment, — conspired to bring me safe through this untoward adventure.

Howbeit, my strength rapidly returned, so that in a few days I was able to help myself about the plantation. Whereupon, I bethought myself of my service that was beholden to General Bacon's army, and was for leaving at an early date. Early one morning, therefore, I broached the matter to my lady, who thereupon reminded me shortly that my first duty was to escort her to Curles, as had been originally intended, as soon as ever I felt able to sit in the saddle.

"Such strength as I have, my lady — which, thanks be to you, is as good as ever — is all yours to command," I made answer, my hand on my heart.

A pretty blush covered the dimples in her cheeks as she replied mockingly: "You are fain, Captain Vivian, to seek another crown of laurel at my hands. Then shall we venture to-day, sir?"

"At your pleasure," I answered, "though I would beg exception, my lady, to the road by the south side."

"Tut! this is mutiny already," she admonished. "But there is no occasion to choose aught save the common road; for, that same day of our leaving Green Springs, the governor's guard stopped here on their return from Curles and made thorough search of the house."

Making hasty preparation to leave while the hour was yet early, therefore, our horses were shortly fetched to the door and we mounted and rode quietly away by ourselves. For both of my men had left; the first going to West Point to join the army and report news of my disability within a day or two after our return to Green Springs, and his brother following him there some two weeks later, after feeling assured of my chances being favourable to recovery.

I felt somewhat strange on again being in the saddle, albeit I knew no fatigue or aught save a keen delight as we rode on. How genially the sun shone forth this morning across the glistening James, playing in vivid colours as it slanted through the foliage at our left! In that heightened fancy that one only knows on restoration to sound health after an illness, I observed every fleeting scene that had been wont to pass without remark. The day, I remember, was late in the month of July.

The mimosa, and the magnolia to which my companion directed my attention, with its dark leaves that glinted when the sunlight fell on them with a lustre like enamel, were now in full bloom, the rare perfume of their flowers being wafted tremulously on the morn's caressing breeze. Walking our horses now, we came silently round a curve in the pathway upon a brood of bright-plumed pheasants feeding daintily on the wild grapes that fringed the woods, and recking so little of danger that they scarce took flight at our approach.

Riding leisurely along, we presently came to the Chickahominy, where it widened out as it entered the James into a broad and dismal swamp, crossed by a long float or bridge constructed out of the trunks of trees, and roughly planked with hewn timbers. Here — and as though life will take on strange shapes when living beyond the ken of God's sunshine — all was fraught with the spirit of some nether world. The blue crane, rising from his morning watch in the shallows, dangled his ungainly shanks as he flapped ponderously overhead; whilst quitting its perch in the top of a lofty pine from which the bark and foliage had been well-nigh stripped by the dank death at its roots, a bald eagle soared away into the cloudless sky.

Some two or three miles beyond, on coming into rising ground again at the edge of a wood, we almost ran over a covey of plump partridge,

so that I quickly aimed my pistol for a try at them. Ere I could snap it, however, my companion startled me with a sharp, "No, no, sir!"

Lowering my gun, I looked at her in some wonderment at her aversion to my act.

"At least, Captain Vivian, you must learn to respect our traditions," she said, smiling at my surprise; "this one being of ill potency, sir, as you might some day learn to your disadvantage."

Thinking it was only some tale of Indian superstition, I laughed and invited her tale, albeit I reposed my pistol.

"At this season of the year," my lady continued, "we neither shoot the partridge because of the tradition, nor eat them because their flesh is poison." And with that she went on to tell me of how the partridge in late summer waxed fat on the berries of the poisonous laurel, to no inconvenience to themselves, but producing deathly symptoms in such as ate of their flesh. Long afterwards, when Virginia had grown to be an open book to me, I chanced to come upon a party of English lads who were on a visit to a neighbouring plantation, and had been out for a day's shooting. They were about finishing their midday meal, and as I came upon them they hospitably invited me to join them in finishing their birds. As I squatted beside them, they began to recite their praises of the

plantations, and were telling eagerly the number of partridges they had killed; when, holding by the drumstick the bird they had served me, in a mixture of sudden fear and disgust, I exclaimed, "Body o' me, my lads! you've not been eating partridge, I trust?"

"Surely, sir," answered one of the youths in some heat; "our palate is not yet so fine as to despise partridge, however 'tis with a Virginian."

Scarce had I finished admonishing them, however, ere they were all three seized with terrible pains at the stomach, their eyes dilating wildly, and their lips assuming a purplish expression, so that it stood them well that I had my flask of Hollands with me, and could thus rally their flagging pulses till the poison had spent itself. But this is a great digression, albeit of such a species that I trust the reader may pardon the telling of it; for in sooth it is as though every word I trace did body forth some later experience, so that I can scarce confine myself within the memoirs of our rebellion, which I have alone set out to do.

Arriving at Shirley a little past the noon hour, we put up at the ordinary of Master Wilkins. He, however, was off on the Indian campaign with General Bacon, so that we were entertained, and right hospitably, too, by his goodwife, who had long known Mistress Langdon. As we were again mounting our

horses to resume our ride, a child of about the age of six, whose long fair curls floated in a mass of sunshine over her shoulders, came running round the corner of the building to see us depart.

"Come here, Bertha!" cried my lady, catching a glimpse of her, and as the child approached she picked her up in her arms with a "God bless you, little one!" kissing her on her mouth, but smiling sadly, methought, and winking her eyes sharply to keep the tears back as she set the child on her feet again and accepted my assistance to mount.

And with a fervent God-speed from Dame Wilkins, who stood on the porch waving her kerchief at us, we were off up the road again towards Curles. My companion was strangely silent for a space, I remember, and her face wore again that look of anxious meditation which I had observed following so quickly upon her wonted blitheness on the first day of our meeting. Yet some there are whose beautiful faces sorrow serves but to heighten and intensify, as though she fained to paint with a masterly hand the shadows that the lights might glow the brighter. So that, stealing a glance at her anon, I was loth to interrupt the thoughts that played over her fairhood like a summer's cloud athwart the morning sky.

"You little know, Captain Vivian, save per-

chance you have heard the tale," she said presently, "what Spartan hearts that mother and her child possess."

I answered that I knew naught of the family, beyond the fact of Master Wilkins's being a generous host to me on a prior occasion.

"He would always be that, sir," she answered. "But that you may know somewhat of the trials our people have had to encounter before conquering this land from the savages, I may tell you that, scarce one year ago, the Indians along the Appomattox broke out into one of their wonted murderous campaigns. Amongst other homes that were molested, and which were generally plundered and burned whilst their occupants were murdered, was that of Master Wilkins. It was nigh the close of an afternoon late in September. Dame Wilkins's brothers, two lusty young men, had returned to the house after a day's work on the plantation, expecting Master Wilkins to follow anon. They had scarce reached the house, however, when the three children, who were playing happily in the yard, set up a frightened cry, 'The ugly red men! the ugly red men!' And, ere they could reach the shelter of their home, a band of savages sprang out of a ravine near them, striking the children down with their tomahawks and rushing on towards the open doorway. Emptying his gun into the shoulder of one of the brothers,

the foremost succeeded in crossing the threshold, but was at once seized by the other brother and thrown to the floor, where he was quickly despatched by the dame herself, who had picked up an axe and struck the savage in the head. Almost at the same moment a second savage entered the house, shooting her brother dead over the prostrate Indian, but was himself instantly disembowelled by a well-directed blow of the axe in the hands of the courageous dame. Then, with the assistance of the first brother, who had been shot in the shoulder, she effected to close and bar the door, after cracking the skull of a third Indian who tried to enter. In less than three minutes' time from the first appearance of the Indians, this one woman had with her own hands killed three of their number and succeeded in saving her home from utter destruction."

After a pause, she added: "And this horrible butchery has been a well-nigh every-day occurrence. Why, sir, 'tis a tale that could not be told in England for its very barbarity, and yet the crown, through its licensed traders, continues to deal out guns and ammunition to the Indians wherewith to murder our people as the fancy moves them."

Her face was flushed with the telling, as we broke away into a quick gallop covering a quarter-mile or more ere I could ask, "And

the children, Mistress Langdon, were they all killed save Bertha?"

"Certainly," she answered hardly; "for I have never known an instance where they have knowingly spared the life of a child. The Indian who struck Bertha down was in such haste to get into the house, that he did not notice the glancing of his tomahawk on the child's neck. She fell, but almost immediately got to her feet again unseen, and hid herself in the trunk of a sycamore which the children had been wont to use for a playhouse. Though the Indians made search for her after scalping the other children, they were forced to leave this one child to comfort the well-nigh frantic parents."

As we rode on over the country, I could not but marvel at the courage that had so long contended against such fearful obstacles in its settlement. For no land, I ween, ever had such a numerous and treacherous race of savages to be subdued — nay, to be utterly deleted, ere either safety or prosperity could obtain. All hope of civilizing them by precept of brotherly love and fair dealing was now well-nigh abandoned; bitter experience having taught the whites that they were no more to be inured to ways of husbandry than were the panther or rattlesnake. In sooth an accursed race, without one jot of manly attribute to plead for their perpetuation; so that, even whilst I write at this late day, I can in truth more than in fancy

still turn my face to the westward and behold again the massacre—a word that has become so common as to bear scarce any significance—and the quick revenge, as the march of civilization goes on, on, over the Blue Ridge and beyond to the broad prairie, perchance to the verge of the western sea, ere these red devils shall finally become exterminated root and branch.

Lest some should hap to see these memoirs and condemn me for holding sentiments that they might class as being unchristian, I would add that it is true there are some tame Indians whom God in his mercy may have set aside for his own purpose. But it is even as though one should chance to pick up a cub or a wee wolf in the forest, and bear it home in his bosom, as I have done on divers occasions. They become anon very droll and amusing pets, albeit I have observed many an unwonted loss in my sheep and hives at such times, so that I was fain to part company with my erratic pets, and resolve in the future to limit my love, so far as might be, to the human family—in which category Indians can scarce belong.

When we arrived in sight of Curles it was nearing sundown, and searching the road far ahead where it skirted Master Bacon's plantation, I could now discern a troop of horse riding slowly out of the premises, and, coming to the gate, turn and make straight towards us. They were yet about a quarter of a mile away, how-

ever, and, bringing our horses to a sudden halt, my companion said in distress, —

“Surely, Captain Vivian, the governor’s guard again!” So after all these days had passed, it seemed that our journey to Curles was to be circumvented after all. But there was no help for it now, that I could see. On either side of the highway, a broad clearing extended for a space of half a mile, whilst to turn and ride down the road would surely excite the suspicion of our followers, and bring them upon us anon in hot pursuit.

“It must be matter of sudden import, my lady,” said I, “that brings them back at this late day. However, there’s naught we can do now, save to ride boldly ahead and let come what may.”

“Then do you leave me, sir!” she cried impetuously. “No harm can come to me, though his Excellency may inflict some penalty upon you if captured.”

“You need have no fear on that score, my lady,” I answered firmly, “so long as General Bacon’s army endures. I am but exercising his commission.”

“And as for kidnapping, sir?” she asked, smiling at me blithely; “that, methinks, is our own affair.”

“If it so please you, my lady,” I rejoined with a sweep of my bonnet, as our horses broke away into a rapid canter.

I had but little time to deliberate over a plan for the avoidance of any direct issue with the governor's party, ere we were upon them. They were riding two abreast, and at their head, resplendent in a rich riding-coat of scarlet and gold, rode a gentleman whom I had seen at the governor's ball, Colonel Philip Ludwell.

Greeting Mistress Langdon with a manner of gallant effusiveness, he cried: "A pretty chase you have led us, my lady, by my troth! His Excellency has been half crazed lest you were lost. Thank heaven! we have found you at last!"

"His Excellency need not concern himself so unwontedly, Colonel Ludwell," she answered; "I am old enough, sir," and she raised herself full an inch in her stirrup, "to look after myself."

"Faith, my lady!" he protested impulsively, "you are unjust to his Excellency. I do assure you —"

"Sir!" she answered, her face colouring warmly; "have I not lived under his roof well-nigh all my life? Methinks you forget yourself, Colonel Ludwell."

"Your pardon, Mistress Langdon," said the colonel swiftly, "I did in sooth speak hastily! I prythee, be so kind as to attribute it only to my concern for your welfare." And turning to me, he continued haughtily, "As for you, sir, consider yourself my prisoner."

"On what grounds, Colonel Ludwell?" my lady interposed, ere I could object.

"For abduction, my lady," he answered, though not without some constraint, "and for wounding an officer of the guard."

"Pish! a trumpery charge, sir!" she laughed contemptuously. "I marvel greatly at your temerity in making it." And again she laughed.

"How so?" he cried passionately. "These are his Excellency's words, my lady."

"A fig for his Excellency's words!" she answered scornfully. "Am I not of age, sir? And as for the wounded guard, I trow the rogue only got his deserts!"

For an instant the colonel's face paled at this unexpected humiliation in the sight of his men. Quickly rallying, however, and curbing his temper finely, he continued: "It vexes me sorely, Mistress Langdon, to have such an unpleasant mission to perform. His Excellency authorized me to say to you, that certain grave matters of state impel him to quit Jamestown in a day or two. He therefore begs you to return at once, and abide with him under the protection of his arm."

"Well," she asked dryly when he had done, "and is that all, Colonel Ludwell?"

"That is all, my lady," he echoed eagerly. "Will you be pleased to return with me this evening?"

"Nay, not this evening, Colonel Ludwell," she rejoined in the same steady voice.

"Ah, you are tired, perchance, having been riding far the day," he replied in tones of courteous consideration that I inwardly thanked him for. So, mistaking her meaning, he continued, "Then on the morrow, Mistress Langdon, when you are rested, you will return with us?"

"Pardon me, sir, but I must likewise decline your escort on the morrow," she answered in a low firm voice.

"Zounds!" he retorted at this unexpected reply to his solicitations. "Do you wish, then, to compel me to deliver you up to the governor?"

"Sir?" she asked imperiously.

"It is as I say, my lady," replied the colonel. "His Excellency has commissioned me to fetch you back to Jamestown."

"Fetch, sir?" she mocked scornfully. "Methinks you said 'begs' before."

The colonel bowed, albeit he risked no reply.

"Go tell your master, Colonel Ludwell," she added, leaning over in her saddle and looking saucily up into his face, "that when the governor's niece chooses to be fetched to the capital across Colonel Ludwell's saddle-bows, she will send him word." And with that, and a quick laugh of stinging rebuke,

she gave the bay hunter a touch of the whip that sent him off up the road like the wind.

Whereat the colonel's face flamed suddenly to the colour of his coat, as he sat there amidst the ill-concealed merriment of his followers; his discomfiture being so intense, so absorbing even, that had I chosen I could have likewise dashed away down the road toward Jamestown, and so on to West Point, with very little fear of their fire or pursuit overtaking me. Some notion of this did indeed come over me, I remember, as I be-thought myself of the summary way his Excellency had of meting out punishment for petty offences; but, my deed being known to him, I quickly concluded that it might be as well to let the matter be adjusted now once for all, as to feel the inconvenience of his disfavour doled out to me at my every chance meeting with his guard.

"Well, sir," said the colonel finally, as though my presence had been overlooked for the nonce, "will you return quietly with us to Jamestown?"

"To answer to the charge just recited?" I asked.

"Certainly!" he cried testily, as though fearful of the serious nature of his complaint again becoming the butt of ridicule.

My quiet affirmative reassured him, however,

and studying me sharply for a moment, he said, "Very well, Captain Vivian, you may retain your sword." And, giving the command to march, we began our return down the road to Jamestown.

Chapter XIII

A Night at the Bacon Plantation

WE had gone scarce a quarter of a mile, however, ere the colonel, who was riding silently at my side, reined up his horse with a sudden jerk, bringing us all to a halt.

"The devil!" he exclaimed. And from the way he turned his horse and looked back over the road we had just come, I could have little doubt what his thoughts were. Albeit he being too gallant a gentleman to apply such an epithet to my lady, I inferred that it was merely an argument of impatience at the dilemma in which he found himself; for, having been commissioned to bring Mistress Langdon back with him, he was riding every minute farther and farther away from the accomplishment of his object.

Watching him therefore, as he meditated for a moment, I expected to hear him command the guard to proceed with me to Jamestown whilst he returned to Master Bacon's plantation after my lady. But he willed otherwise. So that, recalling the circumstance now, and wondering why it was that he failed to act as

I expected him to, and which would have materially altered the course of several lives, I can only explain it by attributing it to the dominance of his one great quality, — vanity. For Colonel Philip Ludwell, though a courageous officer, was ever the conscious courtier and king's man. Whichever way he ventured when in military array, he must ever have his full complement of men round him attired in the spickest and spannest of uniforms, and with the trumpets flourishing and the drums rolling unceasingly. Wherefore, he could not permit himself to be seen riding into Jamestown, mayhap leading a wilful lady on horseback, and attended only by a little handful of men.

Thus it was, I presume, that he now gave the order for us to turn about and retrace the road to Curles. But as I turned my horse and followed after the colonel, I passed close to one of the guard whose face I at once recognized as that of Clarke's, whom I had seen only at infrequent intervals in Jamestown since our first ride to Curles. And knowing him to be a true follower of our cause, I marvelled greatly at his presence in the guard. But there was no chance to speak with him now; and drawing nigh to the Bacon plantation, we turned in at the gateway and continued on to the mansion, where the colonel dismounted and knocked at the door.

A servant answering his summons, he said, "Tell Mistress Bacon that Colonel Ludwell begs to speak with her."

I was surprised, thinking that he could wish to speak with none save my lady. However, assuming his most winning address — than which I doubt no man ever had a pleasanter — when Mistress Bacon stood before him, with a low bow and sweep of his bonnet, he said, —

"I have returned, Mistress Bacon, to beseech your permission to quarter my men here the night. Our nags are so jaded from their quick travel over a roundabout course that it were cruel to spur them on to Jamestown ere morning."

Mistress Bacon glanced at him in surprise, which quickly gave way to a look of merriment playing round the corners of her mouth as the situation dawned upon her. Courtesying prettily, she made answer, "Of a certainty, Colonel Ludwell, we shall be honoured to extend our humble hospitality to the colonel and men of the governor's guard."

And again, it must have been naught save the colonel's vanity that bedimmed his eyes to such a degree that he failed to perceive any roguishness in her reply, or that would have swiftly banished all such suspicion if aroused. For was not he Colonel Philip Ludwell? And was he not welcome, no matter what the hour or circumstance, at the house of every noble

dame in Virginia, all the way from Gloucester to Henrico? Assuredly. And as he smiled there was no doubt of it—not to Colonel Philip! Our horses being led to the stables, therefore, and bedded down for the night, the while they crunched with a fine appetite—these royal nags!—the fodder that was raised on the plantation of the greatest rebel in all Virginia, we proceeded to the mansion to prepare and do likewise.

It must have been somewhat past the hour of seven, the sun having gone down in the west with a crimson glow and flashing its dying lights athwart the James into the fringing forest that seemed strangely alight for an instant, I remember, when the bell rang, summoning us to supper. Whereat we filed into the dining-room, where the table, set in snowy linen, ran nearly the entire length, from the door opening on to the yard to the southward, to near the bay-window commanding the north exposure.

Passing my lady on the way in, who gave me a smile as of mischievous amusement at the turn which affairs had taken, I proceeded on to the seat assigned me to the farther side of Colonel Ludwell, almost within the bay-window. Then, Mistress Bacon having taken her seat near the open door with my lady at her side assisting in doing the honours of the table, we fell to with all of the gusto that is usual to men after a day spent in the saddle.

"You are not assisting, Colonel Ludwell," said Mistress Bacon, "in the present Indian campaign, I believe."

The colonel looked up in momentary embarrassment at the directness of his hostess' query. Hesitating an instant, he replied in tones of suave politeness, "No, Mistress Bacon; his Excellency has seen fit to detail me on other commissions."

"Of vastly more import to the state, Colonel Ludwell," said my lady ironically, thinking his commission referred simply to his present task of getting her back to Jamestown, "than to assist in destroying the savages. Is it not so?" she added, rallying him saucily.

Concealing as best he could the flush of annoyance that mounted swiftly over his features, he replied gallantly: "In good sooth, my lady, were I the sole judge I should answer, 'yes.' For what can be of greater import to us than your own safety?"

"What, forsooth," echoed Mistress Bacon, quite properly jealous of her husband's cause, "save that of ensuring the safety of all with the same measure of interest that you show for one. But for what purpose, Colonel Ludwell, do you seek to terminate my friend's visit on the morrow?"

Scarce liking the question, he answered dryly, "It is his Excellency's wish, Mistress Bacon."

Whereupon, quickly changing the conversa-

tion into a pleasanter channel wherein we all took part, laughing and jesting with great gayety whilst tickling our palates and keeping the victuals flying, Mistress Bacon — the servants being busily occupied round the table — picked up the cream pitcher, and excused herself whilst she stepped to the spring-house. A minute or two may have passed, when, hearing my lady, whose back was towards the open doorway, give a shrill cry of alarm, I had scarce time to look up and then spring hastily to my feet ere the room was in a turmoil, — swarming with savages, mad with the flush of bloodshed, as they struck down the surprised guard, and filled the chaotic air with their wild cry of victory and massacre.

Lurking round the corner of the building, they had entered swiftly and silently on their hands and knees through the open door, and, rising to their feet with a yell as they wielded their tomahawks, had caught us unprepared. Being in the remote corner from the door, I had just time to draw my pistol and despatch the foremost savage who sprang towards us when another was upon us. Making for Colonel Ludwell with his raised tomahawk, the colonel levelled his pistol at the Indian's face, but missed fire. By this time, however, I had managed to draw my sword, and, catching the tomahawk close to my hilt just as it began its descent towards the colonel's head, one of the

guard, seeing our close quarters, snapped his pistol squarely in the face of the savage, who sprang into the air like a wounded animal and dropped stone-dead. Then making towards the door where the Indians were now closely pressed as they turned to retreat, we succeeded in making several of them pay dearly, ere they escaped, for the lives of the guards they had murdered.

The entire engagement could not have occupied more than two or three minutes; from the time that I had first heard Mistress Langdon cry out in alarm, until the savages fled in confusion out into the gathering gloom and on towards the cover of the westward forest. Of their number there were doubtless not less than a score; for, counting the bodies lying there on the floor, we made out a baker's dozen of the redskins, besides seven poor fellows of the guard who lay weltering in their life's blood.

Filled with pity at the sight, I remember that my gorge rose at the lax discipline and wicked craftiness of a governor under whose rule such crime was possible and wont to pass unpunished. God knows I felt no resentment towards the seven guards — dupes of his Excellency — who lay there in horrid death. They were but hired soldiers of the chief conspirator, employed against the regular army of Virginia, which was now in command of General Bacon. That they, fighting with the governor and

against our cause, as events afterwards showed, should be brought low in consequence, is not for me to record—as many a Christian might do—as being due to the wrath of Providence. For it has ever irked me mightily to observe how the great armies of men that should be at peace continue to wage war amongst each other, reckoning ill or scarce at all of the principles for which they struggle, whilst vainly assuming, like Joshua of old, that theirs is the cause of God.

“My God, sirs!” exclaimed Mistress Bacon, appearing now in the doorway as we were counting our loss, “I feared that you all were killed. Where is Mistress Langdon?”

“Nay; was she not with you in the spring-house?” asked Colonel Ludwell quickly.

“With me?” she echoed, her voice trembling with concern for her friend. “Surely not; there was no Indian in sight when I left the house.”

I listened in hot impatience; yet no one spoke for what seemed to me a period of many minutes. Wherefore knowing beyond a doubt that she was being carried into captivity, I cried out upon him for this delay.

But still the colonel stood there impassive and without replying; and another long space it was, I thought—though it could only have been a few seconds—ere any one spoke.

“God be with the lass, Master Vivian!”

cried Mistress Bacon, and, turning towards Colonel Ludwell, she added, "You will be starting in pursuit directly, I trust."

The room had now grown so dark I could not see his face as he replied: "Nay, Mistress Bacon, pursuit with the few men I have left would be folly. Moreover, I must be in Jamestown on the morrow."

"What!" cried Mistress Bacon warmly, and her words found an echo in my heart. "You call it folly, Colonel Ludwell, to rescue this helpless child from the hands of those fiends! Do my ears hear aright? What manner of concern is this that demands your presence in Jamestown when such danger confronts us?"

"The governor's orders, Mistress Bacon, which I have no mind to disobey," he answered, with all the pertinacy of a royal courtier.

"My faith! what a craven pack!" she retorted hotly, and the man must have had a heart of stone not to feel the lash of her words. "Why, sir, are his Excellency's orders infallible when a human life is at stake? And that life a woman's of his own flesh and blood? Are we not to lift a finger in defence of our lives lest we interrupt for a space some intrigue of state? Some plot of treachery is hatching, sir, I'll warrant you; or whence this lukewarmness? For shame, sir!" she continued,

her voice rising in swift anger. "Out of my house with your dead, the while I go seek for a man, a Virginian! who dares say his soul is his own long enough to ride to the rescue of a woman in peril!"

Howbeit, I had already resolved to be off, and quickly, ere ever she had spoken; whereof I now assured her, and beholding how she had tamed the colonel, I completely overlooked the fact of my being prisoner to him. But as I was quitting the room one of the guards stepped forward, saying,—

"And if Captain Vivian will accept my company, Mistress Bacon,"—and I saw the man was Clarke—"I shall be honoured to assist him."

Taking his hand proffered me, I was well pleased to find that his heart was loyal and must be true to our cause, despite the fact of his being in the governor's guard. At the same moment, clearing his voice, which was somewhat husky, Colonel Ludwell said: "You greatly misjudge me, Mistress Bacon, and do but ill conceive my position. We could scarcely hope to come up with the band this night, and, I repeat, I must be in Jamestown the morrow's afternoon. But for these men," he continued, "they have my permission to go and my best wishes. Such others of the guard as elect may desert and do likewise."

But no one else followed Clarke's example.

They had already seen quite enough of Indian warfare, and, having comfortable berths in the governor's pay, had small motive to go on perilous venture unless compelled.

Whilst Clarke went out to prepare the horses, the colonel stepped aside with me for a space, and when we were out of hearing, he remarked: "I know naught of your antecedents, Master Vivian, and, Virginia being full of adventurers, one is apt to suspect a stranger at first sight. Of your valour, however, I am assured, and shall not forget the service you rendered me by drawing your sword for my protection in this Indian scrimmage."

"It was nothing, sir," I answered coldly, feeling a dislike for the man despite of his smug ignorance of my grandfather, belike.

"Not much, sir," he made answer dryly, "to many save myself. Yet I shall remember it, nevertheless. And, as a first instance, I will venture the displeasure of his Excellency by telling him that I allowed you to escape in order to effect the rescue of his niece. How he will take it, I know not; for he is as anxious for your capture as for his niece's safety."

I thanked him as best I could, meanwhile taking occasion to ask if Seager had suffered of his wound?

"No," he answered curtly; "but it had been well for the knave had he been so fortunate. He met death by hanging. Of this,

however, you will doubtless hear more anon." And with expressions of real interest relative to Mistress Langdon, and the hope that we might be successful in our mission, he bade me a formal adieu.

Filled with anxiety though I was at the perilous position of Mistress Langdon, I could not but give a moment's thought to the passing of Seager, having known him for well-nigh a dozen years, during which interval we had been oftentimes associated. And so he had met death by hanging! Yea, truly, although I knew not his offence, the colonel spoke rightly when he stated that Seager might better have died by my sword. And yet I felt it somewhat acutely that any man who had come out to Virginia in my service had so far disgraced me as to be hanged. Albeit Master Seager ever had but scanty consideration for the honour of his friends or associates. So that, passing on to the stables where Clarke was preparing to saddle a second horse, I asked, —

"What's this I hear of Seager being hanged, Master Clarke?"

"Well, sir," he answered, "I know not where you have been living, Captain Vivian, but matters have been getting nicely arranged during the past month, and Seager's rather too much so for his own advantage."

"Proceed," said I, impatient to hear the

particulars. "I have been ill and have heard naught of recent events."

Glancing round a second, and seeing that we were alone, he made answer in a low voice, "It is a long story, captain, and can be more conveniently told when we are in the saddle. But as for Seager, sir," he continued, speaking through his teeth as he tightened the girth to his saddle, "he was hanged for a spy and on very sufficient evidence."

Contenting myself to hear the tale later, we hastily finished our preparation of the nags, of which there were three, we having decided to take one led horse besides our own, the better to facilitate our escape with Mistress Langdon. Clarke, however, grumbled greatly at this, he being of the opinion that horses were but of slight avail in an adventure like the present, the woods being dense and for the greater part pathless. However, I urged that we should the sooner overhaul the savages, should we be so fortunate as to find a way, by going mounted. And, on the other hand, it were a trifling matter to dismount and release our nags to pick their own way homeward, should they prove but a cumbersome baggage.

Then crowding our haversacks with the food that Mistress Bacon had sent out to us, we quickly mounted and rode out past the house. As we did so, the door opened, and standing there in the light that shone forth,

shading her eyes with her hand and seeming somewhat larger and grander in form than I had hitherto remarked,—though mayhap it was naught but the shadows and the silence that deepened round her,—was Mistress Bacon, one of the noblest dames of all Virginia, and whom, since hearing her vigorous denunciation of the governor's policy, I now recognized as being the fitting consort of a fearless and princely husband.

The night fell black in our faces as we rode on and approached rapidly to the shadow of the woods. Going on for a space, we discovered a narrow pathway among the trees, into which we reined our horses and then permitted them to choose their own pace. I was riding slightly in advance whilst Clarke followed on with the led horse. Seeing no sign of a camp-fire, however, and little relishing the gloom and silence of the ride, I finally said,—

“And now, Master Clarke, of the governor's guard, I am ready to hear your story.”

“Let me begin with myself,” he answered. “You wonder at my presence in the guard; yet, if any one of their number knew my motive, my neck would be stretched longer than Master Seager's. It was at General Bacon's request, and not of my seeking, that I joined the guards. And it is my observation and despatches that have kept him duly informed of all that has transpired in the governor's

camp during the army's campaign round West Point."

"Aye, proceed," said I, realizing the risk the man had been under.

"When the army," he continued, "marched out of Jamestown on the day following your affair at the mansion, there was undoubtedly a feeling of relief and security pervading most of the homes of our people. This event, as you know, was what all true Virginians had been waiting and praying for: an end to royal intrigue, and protection assured to life and property. Yet the army had scarce been gone three days when a courier arrived from Gloucester begging the governor for protection against the Indians in that county."

"How so?" I asked. "Did not General Bacon sweep that neighbourhood clear of the rascals on his way?"

"Such was his intention, captain," Clarke protested, "but a scout brought word to him that the savages had escaped and were now awaiting his coming along the Pamunkey. He therefore marched straight on to West Point. Thus it was that the governor, seeing a chance to outrival the general-in-command, and win back the hearts of his people by re-establishing his early reputation as an Indian fighter, summoned all the forces at his back that he could buy or kidnap — promising freedom to the indentured servants — and marched on to Yorktown."

I made no reply, having heard naught as yet that should have caused any rupture between the governor and the army, such as the innuendo in Clarke's manner of speech suggested.

"After pushing rigorously forward and arriving at Gloucester with little delay," continued my companion, "we were met with the intelligence that the Indians had again fled. Upon this his Excellency made a great parade, gathering followers on every hand under the pretence of going in pursuit of the Indians. You know the manner of the old cavalier, Captain Vivian, when he seeks to win the hearts of his subjects?"

"Aye. But did he speak of publick revenues?" I asked.

Clarke chuckled. "Nay, nor of his other friends, the Indians. For, with the loyal trainbands and housekeepers of Gloucester drawn up before him, his Excellency proceeded to deliver a lengthy tirade on fealty to their king and respect to their governor. He spoke of the great danger then threatening the country, not by virtue of Indian outbreaks, but because so many were daft on being led astray into open rebellion to the confiscation of their estates and the destruction of their rights of citizenship. Finally, as amazement and consternation swept over the ranks, he declared it his purpose to march that very day for West Point and

make war on the rebellious army of General Bacon."

"The devil!" I exclaimed, marvelling at the duplicity I had heard. "After signing General Bacon's commission, could he dare to do this?"

"Of a surety, sir; yet when the troops caught the significance of his words, loud was the murmuring as they cried, 'Bacon! Bacon!' Casting down their arms in disgust, they almost without exception broke ranks ere his Excellency had ceased speaking and deserted the field, leaving Sir William to rant and expostulate till he fell in a faint from sheer exhaustion and sore dismay!"

Chapter XIV

The Rescue

THE cogency of Clarke's words fell on me like a blow. Look whither I would, I could see naught but black ruin and inevitable confusion staring us in the face. So that even the darkness of the night and the purpose of our present mission were for the nonce driven from my mind, as I reflected on the peril encompassing General Bacon and the army. True, much might be hoped for in our favour by the desertion of the men of Gloucester; it being known even unto the king that the county of Gloucester was populated by a cavalier element as stanch and loyal as the heart of any monarch could desire. So that I doubted not when news came to his Majesty of the thrusting out of the great army of Virginia, and the verbal proclamation of Sir William that we were all rebels, that a rigid investigation would obtain looking to the desert of the matter.

For a space I seemed not to grasp his words, though dimly conscious of their utterance, as he went on speaking of the hopeless maze into which our cause had drifted. Till, catching

the name of Seager being mentioned, I interrupted grimly, "Methought that knave had already played out his rôle."

"And so he has, Captain Vivian, at present," he made answer, "though not at the time I speak of. For, within a week after his encounter with you—if rumour be true—he was once more amongst us for a few days until detailed by Colonel Ludwell to go and enlist in General Bacon's army. The rascal put up such a penitent aspect that, being in need of trained men, he was commissioned into the service with little ado. And so secretly was this effected that I, who kept my eyes ever with me, failed to fathom the matter and so send word to General Bacon ere the deed was done."

"And so he deliberately thrust his neck into the noose," said I, recalling the grudge Master Bacon had cause to bear him for the trick practised on him at Curles.

"Nay," Clarke replied quickly, "the knave was given every chance to redeem himself. Yet he had not been in the army more than a day or two when he was discovered making mischief. To some he made pleasing overtures of commissions awaiting them at better pay and less fighting than with General Bacon. But to all with whom he dared speak he let fall dark hints of the punishment that awaited them if they failed to get under cover at once.

Withal, the general displayed much leniency. For when Seager was brought before him and thus accused, General Bacon said, 'If any man can say a good word to save this man's life, let him speak out.'

"But none spake," continued Clarke, "and Seager swung within the hour. Yet it is —"

"Hush!" said I suddenly, seeing a light directly ahead of us and but a short distance away, as we came all at once round a turn in the course. At the same time I pulled up my horse sharply, so that Clarke came bumping against my flanks ere he had time to gather his reins. "Have we come up with them already?" I asked, in a voice little above a whisper.

"Impossible," he answered; "but it is well to keep an eye open."

Dismounting, therefore, and tethering our nags hastily we proceeded cautiously onward for a space afoot. We could still see the light blazing fitfully through the foliage, and were fearful of a challenge as we approached. Now and then a twig snapped with a startling report beneath our tread, bringing us to a halt whilst we stood for an instant with our ears on the stretch and all our senses a-quiver. The hour must have been long past midnight when the moon rose over the tops of the forest, scattering its uncertain lights over the scene before us and serving rather to discover us to the

enemy, if present, than as an aid in our search.

In this manner we advanced to within fifty yards of the fire; till, coming to a spot where we could see between the branches of the trees the cleared space in the centre of which the fire burned, we discerned at the same time the forms of Indians sleeping in their blankets. They were disposed like the spokes of a wheel, with their heads outward and their feet towards the fire. As yet we saw no sign of any prisoners or captives; though it was not till we had advanced so close as to hear their heavy breathing and peered into every clump of brushwood where a captive could have lain hidden, that we were at length satisfied to retrace our steps.

"A different tribe, sir," whispered Clarke to me as we picked our way out. "The party that attacked us belonged to the race of Doegs; while this band, from the way they are painted, must belong to the Susquehannocks. A fugitive party, belike."

"But what can account for their presence here?" I asked, knowing them to be out of their land, where we were at this time, along the shores of the Appomattox.

"They are on the retreat, I judge, sir," Clarke made answer; "as was also the party of Doegs. They have been routed by the army along the Pamunkey and are fleeing for

their lives to the south and west. Depend upon it, Virginia will see no more Indian troubles below the Falls of the James for many a year to follow."

Accordingly we retraced our way to where our horses were tethered; and, continuing backward for a matter of a quarter of a mile, we skirted the Indian encampment by a wide detour before continuing onward in our pursuit. By the time morning broke we had travelled so deep into the woods that it was well-nigh impossible for us to go any farther with our horses, what with the dense undergrowth and the low branching trees that threatened, with every step we went on, to lay us low. So that perforce we dismounted; and bending a couple of birch saplings to the ground for our horses to browse upon, we fixed the spot well in our minds and proceeded steadily forward a-foot.

A fine mist had begun to gather as daylight opened, which now turned into a steady drizzle that encompassed us like a sombre cloud. Through this we were barely able to discern objects but a few yards distant. Yet it needed not a moment's reflection on my part — nor, I believe, on my companion's — of the necessity of our advancing swiftly and so surprising the savages with their captive ere they were securely harboured in the wild country beyond the Blue Ridge.

"Tell me, Clarke," said I, after we had

plodded along for several miles, and had finally paused to rest for a space as we came out on an upland where the growth was less rank, "what is the treatment of a captive by the Indians?"

"If marked for captivity, sir," he answered reassuringly, "they are uniformly treated with respect. I have known women who had been made captive and lived among the Indians for several months, till, by virtue of the respect and confidence inspired in their captors, they were eventually able to elude them and make their way homeward."

"And others," I asked, though scarce daring to set my fears in words, "when not meant for captivity?"

"Their barbarity is horrible, sir," he answered. So that, springing to my feet at once, I was quickly plunging ahead through the mist with Clarke close behind, with naught but my alarm to give vivid answer to the sickening fears at my heart.

Coming presently to the edge of a small stream that flowed deeply and with no slight current between its gravelly banks, we were stooping beneath a trailing branch that jutted streamward, when we plainly discerned foot-prints directly in our course. They were yet oozing with the mark of a fresh impress, and as we examined them closely we judged them to be made by a party composed of about a

half-dozen men. But what sent a thrill to my heart, and caused the blood to leap swiftly to my head, was the imprint of a small shoe with its dainty heel buried deeply into the yielding earth where I now knew my lady had but recently stepped.

The glad cry I uttered—an oath it may have been—was sufficiently unrestrained to cause Clarke to remonstrate in a low voice: “Sh! Speak lightly, sir, for Heaven’s sake! Else our presence will work her more harm than good.”

At this moment we heard a grating sound down the stream, and Clarke whispered: “Quick! now is our chance! They are launching a raft.”

Going back from the marge a piece, we hurried on down the stream and separated at a point whence we judged the sound to come. Here Clarke, looking to his firearms, plunged ahead through the underbrush, telling me to follow at a distance, and to keep the stream in close sight. In this manner I had proceeded about fifty paces farther when, coming all at once from behind a huge boulder, I was brought suddenly face to face with two Indians, Mistress Langdon standing a few paces distant to one side.

A raft whereon to cross the stream had just been put together when I came full upon them. There was no time to draw back, for I was seen by them at once. Standing in a moment’s

surprise, and seeing no one following to back me, they gave a grunt of disaffection and sprang towards me with their tomahawks raised. Instantly I levelled my pistol, but snapped it in vain, as it missed fire. Something else, though, ringing out sharply at the same moment, fairly disconcerted them. This was the report of Clarke's musketoon, followed in quick succession by his pistol, and from the yell that rose up from down stream, I gathered that both shots had been of good avail. At any rate, it gave me time to grapple with the larger Indian, whom I saw was a chief, whilst the smaller one danced round us, aiming blows at me with his hatchet. Although the chief was no mean wrestler, I might have disposed of him easily save for his bulk, which prevented a secure hold, and the necessity of dodging the blows aimed at me by his companion. So far I had eluded him; but now, receiving a deep cut on the wrist, my anger rose. Quickly tripping the chief, I sent him sprawling to the water's edge as I dodged a blow and picked up a gun lying by the raft. And this time my gun spoke out, quickly sending the dancing tomahawk-fiend close to its muzzle, into some far eternity of better Indians.

Ere I could prepare for the chief, however, he had risen with a savage yell and, catching me by the shoulder and one leg, threw me violently to the ground. But I clung to him

grimly ; giving him no chance to escape or pick up a hatchet, so that we were both soon rolling and tumbling together in the water's edge. By the time I had regained my feet the water was waist-high, and as we gripped and struggled we were getting every moment farther and farther out to a point that must shortly be beyond our depth.

Seeing this, I made out to catch my enemy by the hair, which his vanity had suffered to grow long, and so to force his head beneath the stream and hold it there. But he continued for several moments to grip me with a hand of steel, and it was not till I felt his grasp grow limp and powerless that I ventured to desist. Scarce had I done so, however, ere he arose sputtering wildly and struggling to escape by running down stream. Yet again I caught him by his hair, dragging his head backward and below the surface, just as I felt the bottom sink beneath me and knew that now I should have to swim for it.

On land I had been his equal, or better. But here in mid-stream his strength seemed to return. Or was it my own that was forced to relax and so give him the advantage? However this may be, I was powerless to hold his head under any longer, as he splashed and swam wildly about, and so was forced to release him. Thereupon he struck out for the shore, swimming vigorously, and I after him in hot pur-

suit, and fearful of his vengeance on Mistress Langdon should he escape me now or first reach the shore.

But I was no match for him in swimming. His great body, unencumbered by a surfeit of clothing, lunged through the deep waters like some sportive sea-monster. He distanced me with every stroke ; so that, when my feet again touched bottom, he had already reached the shore and had picked up a gun lying there.

With no time to dodge or dive, I could look only to his imperfect aim for my safety. I was within twenty paces of him as he pulled the trigger. But that gun—and I can yet hear his cry of baffled rage as he snapped the trigger ineffectually—had been previously discharged, it being the same with which I had killed his companion. Turning swiftly to pick up his own gun, which I had noticed lying close to where Mistress Langdon had been standing, he found himself looking suddenly into its muzzle and my lady herself levelling it steadily at his breast. Waiting not an instant as her eye flashed along the barrel, she discharged the gun full in his body. And with a great cry he leapt backward into the stream and sank instantly below the surface.

And so it was that she fell into my arms, panting and sobbing and terrified. Forgetting for the nonce all manner of courtly restraint, thoughtless alike of pride or station or aught

save the danger and deliverance so quickly passed. So that as I folded her in my arms for a moment, soothing and chiding her gently till her heart beat tranquil, I remember that I was conscious for a space of being fiercely thankful for the circumstance that had so thrown us together. For however much I may have struggled thereafter against the feeling of the great difference of wealth and station between us, —and it rose ever before me like some grim fortress, —the tender memory of this one time when we stood all in all to each other did much embolden and encourage me through the days that followed.

When Master Clarke appeared, — and I have never ceased to wonder how he could have approached us so quickly from the distance at which I had last heard his gun explode, — he gave a low whistle ; then, glancing round, he muttered : “It is strange, sir, that this band should be without a chief. There were six Indians on the raft below, crossing the stream when I fired into them. Yet there was no chief amongst them.”

I quickly explained the mystery of the chief and his disappearance. Whereupon he added, “It is their invariable custom, captain, when killed near a stream to sink themselves into it to avoid being scalped.” The which I accepted, I remember, as being but a disgraceful commentary on the manner in which Indian warfare was

sometimes waged by the planters. Albeit there is naught to set the fashion for such spoils save environment ; so that to shudder more at scalps depending from a belt than at gory heads carried by pikemen is but to cavil at a nicety of choice that can have no honourable foundation.

After waiting only a sufficient time to recharge our guns, we hastily made a pack of such as we could conveniently carry and began to retrace our way. Still fearful of pursuit, however, Mistress Langdon kept well in advance of Clarke and even hurried him over such places where he would fain have passed more slowly. So it was that, noting her anxiety at length, he said : "Have no fears, my lady, leastwise not of pursuit. Every hostile tribe is on the wing and in full flight out of tide-water Virginia towards the Blue Ridge. Our danger is now all before us, if at all, hence we may as well go slowly."

And being thus reassured, she thereafter walked easily at my side, permitting me to assist her now and then where the ground rolled rough and broken beneath our tread, rather than continuing to bound ahead like some startled deer with nerve and sinew tense. So that as we advanced steadily onward towards the spot where we had tethered our nags, stopping for a moment's rest on coming to a convenient spot and where Clarke would recite a tale or two of Indian adventure that served to

belittle the fearsomeness of our present affair, she again resumed that independency of manner that was usual to her.

Yet still another adventure befell us ere we reached safe lodgement. And that came about in this wise. The mist had lifted and the hot July sun was pouring down upon us with an intensity that set our moist garments to steaming as we were crossing an open moor. Seeing that the way lay far before us, we made a detour to the left that we might journey onward in the shade of the forest. Scarce had we entered into it, however, ere the howl of a wolf close to our left, followed by a quick answering howl of the same species far in our rear, caused Clarke to prick up his ears in alarm, as he cried: "Quick! captain! we are discovered. Those were signals you heard."

Hastening to our utmost, and keeping the edge of the moor close in view to our right, we came presently to an old cabin standing open and deserted. From the huge chimney and charred ashes scattered about it had probably been used as a place to boil potash. Hesitating a moment, but hearing again the same wolf-howl signal now close behind us, Clarke said, "Do you two go in the cabin and hide the while I lead them a little chase."

There being no other way, seemingly, and not knowing the number of our enemy, we could do naught save assent. Entering the

cabin, we discovered only one room, from which a ladder ascended into a loft above. There was small time to pause or choose; so that, seeing no place suitable for concealment below, we hastily mounted the ladder into the loft.

Thereupon I was for drawing the ladder up after us, had not my companion, with sharper wit, objected in season. "No, no, sir!" she exclaimed. "Give them but the faintest suspicion that any one is in the cabin and it will be fired."

I murmured at this, I remember, and it was not until later that I saw the wisdom of her words. When, standing hidden behind the brick chimney, we heard the stealthy tread of a moccasined foot below for an instant, ere a savage began lightly to ascend the ladder. Scarce daring to breathe, we waited, whilst he thrust his head above the floor and, with a sound that was between a sniff and a grunt, dropped softly back again to the ground below and ran out.

It was in these little experiences, repeated ever and anon, that I began gradually to learn Indian craft, and how best to baffle and elude them with tricks of cunning. Had I, following my own bent, drawn up the ladder, the Indian would assuredly have fired the cabin from very suspicion of seeing the loft and finding no way to explore it. That which a savage can see and fathom with his naked eye he does

and is satisfied ; but, on the other hand, what he sees and cannot understand, he destroys. The which, methinks, has been a custom with savages the world over.

But enough of Indian warfare, of which I have already striven to record only sufficient to throw light on the causes leading up to the present campaign of Master Bacon. Nor has it been with a glad hand that I have writ this little, making choice with a jealous eye out of my oft experiences only for such as were meet to make mention of. For savage warfare is but savage at best ; and aside from making idle tales for grandchildren,—to which ominous intent I pray these memoirs may never be relegated,—there can be little to interest gentlemen or ladies of honour in the perusal of such history, however potent it may be to our day.

We remained, then, concealed in the cabin for a space ; till, hearing the discharge of fire-arms round us and catching an occasional glimpse of Indians running rapidly by the cabin and on to the westward, we felt assured that the settlers were giving them battle. Quitting the cabin anon during a lull in the firing, we hurried forward and presently found ourselves face to face with a score or so of men who had been gradually approaching us.

These proved to be none other than a detail of the army of General Bacon ; and, himself stepping forward on seeing us, he greeted my

lady in such terms of affectionate concern at finding her safe and unharmed as the occasion warranted. Whilst to me he displayed the same kindly consideration and cordiality that had hitherto marked our intimacy at Jamestown.

Yet there was an anxious, hunted look in his expression at this time, I remember, for which I could ill account considering his successful campaign—the complete routing of the Indians with a loss of a mere handful of his own men—about West Point. When, seating Mistress Langdon in his own saddle, he walked by my side for a space and gave frank utterance to his thoughts.

“Bad days are before us, Vivian,” said he. “A messenger arrived from Jamestown at an early hour this morning, bringing word that his Excellency has posted a proclamation against us, naming us therein as rebels, and is preparing to cross the Chesapeake into Accomack, where he will await the assistance of vessels from England preparatory to our dispersion.”

I was appalled. Well as I had come to know the ways of Sir William Berkeley, and though Clarke had in a measure prepared me for this by the news he had recited, this last subtle trick of the governor’s, whereby he had lured us all into an appearance of rebellion,—despite his signature to our commissions,—was of a piece so vile, so traitorous, that I could scarce make answer for my gorge rising.

“Zounds!” I exclaimed. “And what of the letter to the king, endorsed by the Council and burgesses, and signed by the governor himself? Surely, sir, his Majesty will not sanction this deception?”

“That depends, my friend,” he replied, as though he had long felt the weight of this contingency. “Sir William stands in high favour at court. A wish expressed on his part has oft outweighed justice in the royal balances. Let him but cry, ‘Sire, my country is in revolt,’ and I greatly fear me lest we shall be overpowered and undone by troops sent over from England ere ever an investigation be made. Such might afterwards follow. And it is to circumvent such prejudiced interference that we must now stand together to a man. Such a confederacy I shall enforce, Captain Vivian,” he continued firmly, — almost fiercely, — “with all my might; that the loyal housekeepers of Virginia may receive the same just dispensation from his Majesty that he would accord to his royal officials.”

To this purpose, of which I clearly saw the necessity, I hastened to assure him of my own sympathy and support. So that by the time we arrived at the spot where our three horses had been tethered, — and where we found Clarke awaiting us, seated on a log with his musketoon across his knee, — the plans and the hopes of the general of the army were now fully revealed to me. And, desperate though they were, I

remember — as I helped my lady from the general's horse and so again into her own saddle, whilst she smiled on me an instant and said something of my wearing but a rueful countenance for a victorious knight-errant — I well remember that, adown the vista of the gathering days, — wherein many of us should find naught save ruin and disgrace, — my heart already discerned the prize, and I was satisfied.

Chapter XV

A Romance of the Rhine

IT was somewhat past the noon hour when our party arrived back at Curles. But the joy with which we were hailed by Mistress Bacon and various members of the household, on learning of our successful return, formed a scene which these eyes shall not speedily forget ; for, immeshed in misfortune though we were between the governor and the Indians, such did but serve to better unite the interests and affections of our own party.

“Thank God, my love!” cried Mistress Bacon, running towards us and catching my lady from her saddle ere any of us could dismount ; “thank God for your safe return !”

Of the welcome extended to me, however gratifying it was to myself, there can be but little merit in its telling. And yet, such was their influence over my life, I cannot rush rapidly over the details of the days that followed ; when, the army of Virginia having been temporarily disbanded, a small and oddly assorted party of us remained as guests in attendance on General Bacon at his home for a few days. A call had been issued, however,

looking to a vast assemblage of the people on the third day of August at Middle Plantation. And until that day we had now little to do, save that of seeking our own amusement.

Among others in our party was a young gentleman, Captain Harry Evelyn, lately returned from England, whither he had been in attendance on one of the universities. Having reached Jamestown at about the time of the organization of the army, his enthusiastic bent and the wealth of his family had easily led to his procuring a commission as captain on General Bacon's staff. And a very prince of young officers he was; being scarce five and twenty years of age, of a slender habit, and a queerish little black line that stood him in lieu of a mustache. His military information—gathered from reading principally, for he had experienced little—was of that nature which was at least seductive to hearken to; and this, coupled with his generous wit and gayety of demeanour, insured him the favour of all in the army who knew him.

Having known Mistress Langdon from early childhood, they were naturally much given to seeking each other's company during these idle days; now fishing and rowing on the river, and anon—with the sly pretence of a fowling-piece cocked over one shoulder—off for a stroll and a chance shot in the woods.

My feelings on beholding how matters stood,

I remember, were a strange medley of a lover's impatience and a soldier's abnegation. For, not presuming so far as to court her openly myself, or to strain that confidence which accident and not her choice had fixed, I yet had that feeling of priority in her service, which all the wealth and prominence and childhood affection in the world, on the part of Master Evelyn, could not quite annihilate.

And as for herself—but when is a woman ever more beautiful, more captivating, more altogether admirable, than when flushed with that improvident independency of having two or more strings to her bow?

This I may not answer, however, it being, forsooth, far removed from my province to do so. But this I do know: that she never looked sweeter than on such times, when, coming suddenly round the corner of the house, oft-times carrying a basket in one hand and trailing her hat in the other, she would chance to catch Master Evelyn and myself lounging and swapping stories on the porch. And at sight of her, with a great sweep of our bonnets and much unseemly haste, would the both of us strive swiftly to reach her side and mayhap seize her basket on one and the same instant.

Then would follow much raillery, much maidenly blushing; and the hour chancing to be late and close upon the dinner, perchance a little indignant protest over these unsoldierly

antics and our forcible detention of her. Whereupon Captain Evelyn, with a great parade of judicial resource and regard for historic precedent, would threaten to end the matter then and there by halving the basket with his sword, Solomon-like, giving one piece to me and retaining the other unto himself.

On such occasions, then, whenever there was a duty to be performed, such, to wit, as carrying a basket, I was ever ready to insist upon my right to serve. But at other times, when by no manner of excuse could I place myself at her side, I was wont to stand aloof and leave the way broadly open to Master Evelyn. And this I did—as I now pride myself—with all the graciousness that a gentleman should command on such trying occasions.

At all events, I think my lady noted such regard, and the sedulous respect with which I ever honoured the difference of our positions. For, coming to me one morning,—and I remember it was the day before we left Curles,—she said: “Will you not row me upon the river this morning, Captain Vivian? Methinks it would drive the dulness from my head.”

And as I assented, joyfully, I still remember Master Evelyn as he continued to stand there, gazing out into space and pulling so fiercely with his finger-nails at the black line along his lip, that I did greatly fear me lest his face

should be as smooth as my lady's ere ever we returned.

Wending our way to the river by the path through the pasture, the scene was everywhere so blithe and spirited as to make the heart beat gladly in response. Here and there the grass rose on either side half-way to my boot tops, switching them with a rhythmic sound as we walked on that was musical to the ear — such as I still love to hearken unto when passing across my fields, as it recalls the day. Near by, swinging jauntily on the end of some slender twig, the bobolink whistled at us saucily; the while his neighbour and rival, the meadow-lark, rose into the air for an instant with his throat full to bursting and then dropped silently to perch again in a cluster of goldenrod growing beside the path. And above, in the soft blue sky, the swallows twittered and circled, keeping the outline of the river ever in their path as it glinted and flowed in the sunshine like a silvery thread in the distance.

“Shall it be up or down stream, sir?” she asked as we came to the skiff, which was fastened to a small landing at the end of the path.

“Either way, my lady,” I made proud to answer; “my happiness will be the same.”

She frowned an instant, but affected to conceal a smile the next as she asked carelessly,

"Oh, sir, but do you never give expression to a wish?"

Posed by her manner, but taking the hand she held out and assisting her to a seat by the tiller, I replied: "Nay, my lady; would the stream that's flowing seaward wish to flow the other way?"

She glanced quickly down into the water. "You mean back to its scattered sources, sir, perchance?" And the next instant, her eyes dancing at me, she added: "Methinks that some streams might."

Whereat I grasped an oar and pushed silently into deep water.

A little way offshore the sloop was riding with her anchor apeak. Passing alongside, I recalled the time when I had last seen her, when struggling to hail her just before her capture by the *Adam and Eve*. But already I was thinking of the marvellous change that had come over my life since landing in Virginia but two months ago, and thence back to the time in London, when, being sore put to it for employment, I had been driven to accept the opportunity afforded by a voyage to the plantations.

From such reflections I was interrupted by Mistress Langdon asking, "And shall you return to England, Captain Vivian, after your present engagement?"

"Never, my lady," I replied, with somewhat

more vehemence than the occasion mayhap warranted.

"Nay, has the stream likewise no love for its sources?" And she laughed. "Yet you can know little of the future here, sir."

"True," I replied humbly; "and yet I know even less of England. Methinks the free air of the colonies has cast its spell upon me."

"Ah, the colonies?" she repeated doubtfully; and added: "Such, I believe, is oft the effect on those that come across the seas. But look!" she continued, pointing off to the right. "That is Varina, the estate of Pocahontas."

"And of Captain John Smith, I opine?" said I, but dimly remembering the tale of the intrepid chevalier, save that he had, perchance, wrought more for Virginia in his day than any other person.

"Nay, sir, you do forget yourself," she replied; "Pocahontas became the bride of Captain Rolfe." And, after a moment's pause, she continued, "Is it not sad to think, sir, that she did not marry Master Smith?"

"In sooth, my lady," I stammered, "I fear me that I have given the tale but scant consideration. But," I continued, "whatever the world may think of him, Captain Rolfe, I presume, was satisfied?"

"Chut!" she admonished, though laughing

despite herself at my unromantic inference. "You take but small delight then, Captain Vivian, in these tales of the past?"

"On the contrary, my lady," I answered with eager sincerity, "if you will pardon my seeming not to appear so, I do indeed set great store by such history."

"Ah," she answered, her face lighting all over like a child's on discovering some sympathy with her own fancies, "and what ones do you especially enjoy, sir—say above all the rest?"

Resting on my oars a space, and allowing the boat to drift with the stream under the shade of the southward bank, after a moment's reflection I answered, "I love best, my lady, those romaunts of the Rhine, and, better than all the rest, the one having for its monument the lofty rock known as Roland's Eck."

"Roland's Eck?" she repeated in slow wonderment, the lids closing slightly over the gray eyes as they pried within for a space. "Nay, sir," she said finally; "I do not recall it."

She had removed her hat, absently, and the light breeze was playing with the wavy brown hair as I answered, "If it please you, my lady, Roland, or Rolando—"

"Stay!" she cried. "Is it of Charlemagne's doughty knight you speak?"

"The same," I answered, smiling at the sparkle in her eyes.

"Then, sir, I have read of him in the work of Pulci, the Florentine, in my uncle's collection. And yet," she continued perplexedly, "I know naught of Roland's Eck. Pray tell me the tale."

"It runs in this manner," I replied; "though, like most of the romaunts of the feudal Rhine, I have never seen it in print, this one having come to my ears round the camp-fire when, after a hard day's battle under Turenne, we pitched our encampment one night at a little village in the gloomy shade of the majestic Drachenfels."

"And this is the way I heard it. Whilst Roland was one day hunting the boar in a near-by forest, being greatly fatigued with the chase and his failance to come up with the beast, he threw himself down at the edge of the forest beside a path leading to a distant castle. Here he purposed to await the return of his servants, who were still in pursuit of the boar. And as he waited, whilst the sun dropped low in the forest with the waning day, he heard the blare of a horn and beheld riding towards him a lady of passing loveliness, attended only by two maids and a lackey."

"How strange, sir," murmured my lady archly, "that she should have been so ill attended when servants were so well to hand at that day."

"Nay, if it please you," said I, "it is a good servant that knows his right place. And those

of romaunts, I have observed, do ever display a nice tact in such matters."

"Go on, sir," she continued; with a laugh aside at my seriousness over the tale, even as I had smiled at her own feeling for Pocahontas.

"And so it happened," I continued, "that just as she had approached to within a few paces from him, the blast of a second horn pierced the ear, and the boar came crashing through the thicket directly into the path. For an instant he stood at bay, with the hounds tearing furiously at him. Then, turning suddenly, he charged savagely at the lady, whose horse was foundering on his knees in fright.

"Then it was that Roland sprang forward, and did wage fierce battle with the boar; circling round and round, and receiving a vicious wound from the boar's tusk ere ever he succeeded in despatching the beast with a blow of his famous Durandal — the same that afterwards cleft the Pyrenees. Whence it followed that, when he had recovered from the swoon of the fight and the loss of blood, he found himself lying in the castle, whither he had been fetched by his servants at the command of the lady."

"Tut, tut! a paltry tale, sir," cried my companion as I paused for an instant as though finished. "And now you would tell me," she added indignantly, "that Roland married the

lady, and that ever after the castle was known as Roland's Eck?"

"Wherefore not?" I asked with raillery. "Were such not a beautiful legend to march romantic down the centuries?"

"Nay, sir!" she exclaimed scornfully. "Not for Orlando Furioso, nor yet Orlando Innamorato; though for some —"

"But, my lady," I protested, "if you would, peradventure, only hear the end of it?"

"What!" she cried impatiently; "have you been playing me a trick, sir?"

"I merely paused," said I, "if you will pardon me, to see that the tale was not tiring you."

"And it was, sir," she laughed in merry disdain. "You divined truly, for it was tiring me greatly." Whereupon I took up the oars and fell to, pulling steadily for a space, and coming near to the opposite shore.

But there is that in a woman's nature which does not allow a good story to spoil for its keeping. For, whether it be naught but an airy trifle, or some melancholy tragedy in which some sister has played her noble and deathless rôle, a woman loves to take the tale to her heart and there ponder it almost until it becomes a part of her being, — until it emerges the better for the innocence it has met. It is to this curious sense, and to their beginning participation in the pleasures of reading, let us trust, that much is to be hoped for tending to

the refinement of our present English literature.

Hence, as I once more rested on my oars and allowed the boat to drift, my lady looked up from the water where she had been trailing her hand. "Well, sir," she demanded, as though she had all along been waiting me to resume, "when am I to hear the end of this tale?"

And so, glad to regain her favour, I went on to tell her that tale of a thousand years as it has come down the ages, tremulous with the grandeur and the pathos and the gloom of the Drachenfels, and murmuring on into eternity with the song of the beautiful Rhine. How that, Roland being betrothed to the beautiful daughter of the castle's lord, he dallies there for many a happy day; until a courier arrives from Charlemagne, demanding the presence of his good knight in Spain, where they are to fight against the Saracens. And so, with the fondest of farewells, he takes his departure.

"And of his return, sir?" asked my lady, gazing down into the water as we drifted on.

"After many days," I continued, "word comes that the entire rear guard of Charlemagne's army has been cut off in front of Saragossa and that Roland has fallen among the number. At this news his betrothed enters the convent of Nonnenwerth and takes the irrevocable veil. Yet Roland does return, having been delayed merely by foundurous roads over

a roundabout course. Again he approaches the castle, with such a blast of his horn, born of gladness and hope, that the doors of the castle fall in and the rocks tremble.

“Whereupon, being told that his betrothed has become the bride of Heaven, he builds a castle on a lofty rock overlooking the nunnery. And from this point of vantage, he one day catches a glimpse of her and she likewise of him, as she walks in the cloister below. But, waving him a farewell, though he watches for days and years, he sees her again no more.”

As I came to a finish, the boat had drifted on to where a gravelly bluff rose sheer from the river's marge. Above, in the far-reaching pine forest, the wind sighed mournfully through the trees; and low down, grazing the sides of the boat as we passed, the willows drooping sombrously, carried me swiftly back in memory to the little isle of Nonnenwerth nestling beside the Rhine.

“Well?” I asked finally, breaking the silence as my lady still said naught.

Looking up with a start, she said: “A pretty tale, Captain Vivian. I thank you, for it has carried me out of Virginia for a space.”

“But,” I made bold to ask, “do you fain to be elsewhere, then — in England, mayhap?”

“Nay, sir,” she answered with a smile that was half sad in its passing sweetness. “I was born here; this is my country. And some

day —” and breaking off suddenly into her former manner she continued, “Now let us go ashore, Captain Vivian.”

Brave little heart, I thought, that could endure the turbulence of state and the separation from kin, whilst it peered unfalteringly into the future and hoped — when many had ceased to do so — for that time when the sun was to shine once more upon Virginia, prospering and contented !

And so it was, feeling in this mood perchance, that, after fastening the boat to the shore, I took the hand she held out and forgot to release it for a space after assisting her to my side. Then, conscious only that I loved her, and recking little at that moment of rank or circumstance, I was about to bespeak her favour, when, as though divining my intent, the crimson mantling swiftly to her cheeks, she said : “Please do not speak, sir. Wait !”

And yet she did not withdraw her hand directly ; nor, as I bowed over it a moment, do I believe she took exception to my transgression.

* * * * *

When nigh half-way back, we came up with Master Bacon and young Master Evelyn, each with his gun under his arm and with his game-bag swelled widely.

“Well, Mistress Langdon,” cried Master

Evelyn; "and what found you upon the water this morning?"

"Found?" she echoed, and then with a quick laugh she added, "Oh, sir, I found naught save a castle—a castle on the Rhine."

"How so?" he asked, not catching her meaning at first. Then, with a glance at me, he added, "So; one of Captain Vivian's tales, belike. But it was in graceless compliment, sir, to descant of the Rhine when boating on the James."

"Yet why not?" Master Bacon interposed. "What manner of affinity can one observe between the two? America was born too late for legend. Her mighty streams are for naught save commerce."

"That I shall never grant, Master Bacon," cried my lady with loyal pertinacy; "not when so much has happed in the past."

"And where so much might have happed beside," I urged, coming to her support, "had Master John Smith but returned hitherward with his errant fancy."

Chapter XVI

The Scene at Middle Plantation

I SHALL not detail our return to Jamestown on the following morning, save that, being up betimes, after a farewell to the household—the which more than one of us trusted might be only for a brief space—we were once more into the saddle and away. With Mistress Langdon I had exchanged few words since the previous morning; but, bethinking me just before our departure of her ring, which I had left with Mistress Bacon, I regained its possession and presented it to her with many a humble and profuse apology.

She coloured swiftly, yet accepted it with scarce a word; so that the matter had shortly escaped my mind. But as we were riding slowly down the road leading from the house, I was engaged in adjusting my stirrup and had so dropped somewhat to the rear of the party, when a boy came running after me, yelling, “Hi! hi!” at the top of his voice.

Something he was extending in his hand towards me, whereat, turning my horse sideways, I reached down, and, glancing hastily at it, thrust it quickly in my holster.

“Go on!” I cried to the men ahead, who had drawn rein at the lad’s voice and were watching me. “It is naught save a buckle I had dropped.”

And in truth that was all; there being but little difference betwixt a buckle and a ring to a trooper. Yet as I drew it forth upon our horses breaking into a gallop, and glanced again at the little satin bow tied intricately about the ring, I placed it this time within my doublet, where it would be secure from the vulgar gaze of the passer-by.

As expected, our party was greatly swelled ere we arrived at Jamestown that evening, by reason of other parties joining us on every hand, all purposing to attend the convention at Middle Plantation set for the following day. So that our welcome from Master Lawrence on beholding us alight at his door partook of all his wonted hospitality, in which he was ably backed up by his wife now that Sir William Berkeley was no longer in the vicinity to despoil her house with search parties.

That night the ordinary was in an uproar, being boisterous with the dissent of opposing factions from every shire. For the alarm had gone forth, and whilst Master Drummond, mounted on a stool, went on speaking fearlessly in one corner to a group of loyal souls from the middle and up country, another party from Gloucester and New Kent was being addressed

in quite different tones by no less a personage than Sir Henry Chicheley. And during it all Master Lawrence and his excellent wife continued to dispense their sack to the intent that naught save right good feeling should prevail at such a time; not forgetting, however, to look close after the price, albeit to no purpose save that of being able to give more substantially afterwards to the cause of Master Bacon.

But it was on the following day when at Middle Plantation that matters came to a crisis. From every road and by-path that led to this perchance the most accessible and central point in all Virginia, the people had been coming steadily since an early hour in the morn. So that for numbers, as we met on the village green, was there no lack. But the contention, the petty jealousy, yea, even the fear that obtained! It was so pitiful and maddening to behold that I still remember the anger of Master Bacon as he approached late in the afternoon to the spot where Captain Evelyn and I were at that moment standing.

"Damn it!" he cried, snatching his bonnet aside whilst the breeze scattered the dark curls over his hot forehead. "The crowd's palsied with fear since that rascally scoundrel, Berkeley, left our shores. They'd scarce dare draw a bead on a savage now to save their souls from hell!"

"They need disciplining, sir," cried Master

Evelyn. "Put them in harness again and apply the lash!"

"Zounds, lad!" he retorted impatiently, "and what have I been doing the past five weeks save disciplining them? Aye, and they waded into the fight nobly, too,—that I will say! But how is the half of them returned after a three days' halt? Look, Vivian," he continued, shooting his eyes over my head to where a small party stood talking, "look at yon great hulk with his six feet of splendid manhood, as he stands there digging the toe of his boot into the sod whilst his heart flutters and wavers like that of a slender miss who has been caught dallying with her first lover. Bah! and the man addressing them—Lieutenant Arnold. Observe how slyly he glances this way to see if he is being watched!"

"Yet that is the same party, General Bacon, almost to a man, that led the van on the second day's skirmish on the Pamunkey," said Captain Evelyn.

"And don't I tell you, lad," cried the general, "that that's wherein the pity of it lies. These men are no poltroons at heart. But the fear of the king, of some unknown and invisible power about to encompass them, makes cowards of them all. It is such a menace," he continued, his eyes shooting scornfully, "as even the shadow of should not be permitted to rest darkly over a free land

for a moment. But a few years more of its darksome influence and we shall be Helots all."

"Pardon me, general," said I after a moment's pause, "but is it not still your intention to administer the oath to them?"

"Such was my plan, Vivian, as you will recall," he answered. "But," he added with a bitter laugh, "how many think you, sir, would subscribe at this moment?"

"In sooth, sir, I doubt that few," said I. "And yet I recall, Master Bacon, a tale of my father's when Englishmen were fighting for their liberties, that is somewhat german to our present exigency."

He gazed at me a second, doubtfully ; then, as though he would cast the day and his burdens from his mind, he repeated: "A tale, is it? By the Lord, my friend, I like your coolness. But come along, let us go fill our stomachs and digest the tale at the same time."

Fetching our haversacks, therefore, we sought the shade of a convenient tree, and after spreading our lunch, Master Bacon said: "Now let us hear the story, Vivian. Though Heaven grant that it be soporific to my jaded soul, as" — he added with a wink of his eye at Captain Evelyn — "no doubt it will!"

"It is scarce necessary to remind you, gentlemen," I began, nothing daunted, "that the

first year of our late civil war was naught but a series of victories for the royalists. So that when Bristol, too, fell into their hands, a great many of the Roundheads were sore dismayed. It was in this wise, then, that a party of them in command of my father came to lie one night at a convenient tavern; and, no news of reassurance having come, they had lifted up their voices in prayer, kneeling together before their chairs circled about the tap-room.

“These observances being performed, their captain retired to an adjoining room; but he had been absent only a few moments when a fierce muttering, followed by a crash as of chairs being thrown about, rose out of the tap-room.

“Fearing that his party had been surrounded and attacked, my father quickly threw open the door, but at first sight he beheld only his own men madly tearing at bits of paper and grinding particles of plaster beneath their boot-heels.

“‘How now, men?’ cried he austere-ly. ‘What foolish riot is this?’

“‘Zis! monsieur le capitaine,’ cried a wiry, dark-visaged Frenchman, rising from the floor and shaking himself loose from the grasp of a couple of burly Roundheads. ‘Zat is what I cry. Sanctus, monsieur! see!’ he continued, whilst he danced excitedly round a heap of torn papers lying on the floor. ‘Ze

holy Pope and ze Virgin Mary both gone to ze devil! Satisfaction, monsieur! Satisfaction!’

“‘Peace, you knave!’ commanded the captain sternly. ‘What would you with this trumpery?’

“‘Trumpery, monsieur!’ he echoed. ‘Sacre!’ and his eyes flashed wickedly. But seeing the set look on my parent’s countenance, he suddenly desisted and began wringing his hands and whining piteously: ‘A fortune, monsieur, gone to ze devil! Ten zousand Irish troops and good Catholics, monsieur, have come to fight for ze king. Peste! ten zousand devils, monsieur, were the same to me now.’ And so, between curses and solicitations for satisfaction of the damage done him by the soldiers breaking his crucifixes and destroying his prints, he went on to tell how, hearing of the landing of the Irish and the prevalence of popery in the king’s army, he had gathered up his stock and hastily set out to reach their quarters.

“But this piece of news my father used to say, General Bacon,” I continued, “being the first the Roundheads had heard of the landing of the Irish, did more to nerve their arms and band them together than any other circumstance at the time. The Irish being odious and barbarous savages, and Parliament having voted that no quarter should be shown them in any action, the Roundheads turned about and went into the next battle, fighting as they

never fought before for the preservation of themselves and families against the atrocities of the heathen."

"Thank God for the Roundheads, sir!" cried young Master Evelyn with a sudden fervency of spirit; for though his fathers before him had been arrayed on the cavalier side, the favour of the present generation was being steadily estranged by the course of the second Charles, and it would be scarcely a matter to marvel at if this feeling should culminate in a second civil war at some early period.

"And for the Irish likewise!" rejoined the general. Then after a second's thought, he added, "Zounds! had I foreseen this desertion, the savages might have gone on scalping to their heart's content ere ever I had lifted a finger to drive them out."

"Yet, sir," urged Captain Evelyn, catching the intent of my remarks, "a sudden Indian outbreak, as Captain Vivian suggests, would bring the men to your back again."

"But what of that, lad?" cried the general impatiently, "what of that? Are we to go out and drive the savages back into the low country in order to rouse the waning courage of Virginia? Bah! this is childish."

"If you will pardon me, general," persisted Evelyn, "I heard at Jamestown early this morning that the Susquehannocks were gathering to the northward."

"Impossible, sir! Yet tell me," he continued eagerly, "how heard you that?"

"From a planter, sir, who came in with Brent's men from the north of Gloucester."

"And had Brent heard the rumour, think you?"

"He must," answered Wright; "for the matter was being bruited freely among them when I heard it."

"Then it is good news, gentlemen," cried the general, with rising excitement. "Good news; yet, by the gods! is it not pitiful that men of Virginia should have to first wait to hear the tale of a fresh massacre ere they dare take oath to stand together, let come what may?"

Bethinking himself, he exclaimed with a sparkle of the eye: "*A ruse de guerre?* Excellent, my friend, and Heaven knows the rascals deserve naught else for their desertion of me at this crisis. But do you two arrange it between yourselves," he continued, rising to his feet with his wonted sprightliness; "I shall harangue the men a couple of hours hence."

It would be now nigh the hour of sunset. Deciding quickly on a plan of action, we separated and made our way from the midst without attracting attention. As I mounted my horse and rode slowly out to the northward, I could see the men, the former army of Virginia, still scattered in little groups here and there, and each one intent only on the safety of him-

self the while he left the ranks deserted and open for the devil to come take the hindmost. So that I wondered for a moment, considering the pass at which things had arrived, that Master Bacon did not abandon them then and there to their fate whilst he betook himself to cover in some less dangerous land.

Spurring my horse into a gallop, I held on to the northward, — Captain Evelyn having taken a road leading somewhat more to the east, — and as dusk was falling I sighted the York River. Thence following the turn in the road as it approached the water, I went on for about a quarter-mile farther till I came to a path running off to a plantation, the buildings of which I could discern through the gloom.

At this point, having turned out of the road into the path, I was so unfortunate as to get mired in a small creek as I followed the path across a small ravine. This delayed me greatly, although as my horse emerged panting and besmirched, it rather facilitated than otherwise the success of the plan I was then engaged in, giving us the appearance of having ridden in great haste over foundrous roads.

Riding swiftly up to the house, I reined my nag up at the door with a loud cry. And after knocking sharply at the door with my riding-switch, I had waited but a few moments ere it was opened to me, and a boy of about sixteen stood before me.

"Go call your father, my lad," I cried hastily, "and be pleased to step lively."

"He's not here, sir," he answered shortly, but after a manner so suspicious as to make me believe he must be somewhere about the place.

"Then go find him," I cried, exasperated at his delay. "Quick! before I put my switch about your legs."

"But I tell you, sir, he's not at home," he answered stubbornly, making as though he would close the door in my face.

"Chut!" said I. "If not at home, then where else can he be?"

"He's doing service, sir," he replied, but in a manner that displayed his fear of making such an admission.

"Ah!" said I in a different tone, seeing the lad watching me furtively, as though I had, perchance, come to call his father to an accounting. "And is he doing service for General Bacon, or for the governor?"

For a space he would not reply, at which I commanded sharply, "Come, my lad, speak up and have no fear!"

"Well, sir," he answered at length, "my father is at Middle Plantation with the army of Virginia."

"That is well, my lad," I cried quickly, "for I, too, am riding towards Middle Plantation. The Indians have broken out to the

north of Gloucester, and I've ridden till my horse is well-nigh foundered. Have you not a nag you can loan me?"

"Certainly, sir," he replied heartily, and was for starting to fetch it when I called after him,—

"Stay, my lad! Do you mount yourself and ride on ahead as swiftly as possible. When you arrive at Middle Plantation, go straight to your parent and say to him a messenger from Gloucester sent you to give warning of the Indians. Let him inform Captain Brent and his men."

With a ready assent, the boy was quickly mounted and off at a gallop towards Middle Plantation, whilst I continued after him at a leisurely pace. Coming to a cross-road, however, when about half-way back, I caught the sound of galloping hoofs to my left and presently a horseman shot past me, riding at a furious clip and shouting out,—

"The savages are murdering Gloucester! Fall in with us, sir! To the army!"

The words roared in my ears for an instant, so that—there being never an occasion to alarm the country for sport, and such a cry being ever too fraught with remembrance of awful happenings to admit of its being heard without terror—I was almost on the point of spurring my horse and dashing after him. But reflecting quickly that this might only be some of

Captain Evelyn's work, I contented myself to let the messenger carry his own news, whether true or false; albeit I quickened my pace somewhat in order to be in on time to witness its effect.

Yet I remember that my thoughts travelled that night faster than my good nag's hoofs, and they were thoughts that I would fain be rid of to this day; for, being a lover of my fellow-man, it does depress me greatly to recall how many of our men had at that day to be driven by a trick to take the oath that would insure their own liberty. And it is bitter to reflect that to some this word is naught save an abstraction, the which they love to hearken unto while some glib-tongued orator draws the curtain and reveals the glorious vista for a second's space, before their eyes again close into their normal blindness.

Passing strange it is, too, that from all time and among the least enlightened of races, whilst liberty has been an abstraction, their religion was never such. So that they have fought—zounds, how have they not fought!—for this latter with such ardour and persistency as naught else could inspire. And the worse the religion, the harder they strike; so that I remember my father used to say that he could always tell such of his men as were true Christians at heart, by the way they cracked their broadswords over the skulls of



“ Upon this platform I now recognized General Bacon.”
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the unchosen in the ranks of Charles the First.

The night had fallen ere I arrived back at Middle Plantation. Riding on to the scene of the meeting, the young moon peeped its crescent above the tops of the forest, shedding but a vague light before me, till, coming out upon the green, where huge bonfires had been kindled, it was like stepping suddenly from night into broad daylight. Yet the silence of night hung over the scene as I entered, giving a weird aspect to the dark figures standing in a motionless mass before a platform that stood level with their heads.

Upon this platform I now recognized General Bacon; he having come to a pause in his speech about the time of my arrival. But now as I drew nigh, he began: "Men of Virginia, yours it is to declare whether you will henceforth govern yourselves or continue to be tricked by Sir William Berkeley. Consider for a moment the homes for which you have toiled and fought. Has Berkeley ever done aught in their defence? Or has he not, rather, taking advantage of your struggles, deliberately absented himself from your midst under the pretext of his life being jeopardized by you? And with this paltry excuse will he seek your undoing before the crown. What say you to this, my men? That you will meekly disperse to your homes, duped, routed, and there await

the coming of English troops to drag you before the governor with a halter round your necks?"

A murmur beginning to ascend from the crowd, which, taking it only for one of disaffection, he continued: "Think not that I speak for my own ends. Heaven forbend that I should be the one to lead you into peril, when I seek naught at your hands save your own good. Choose some other general if you misdoubt me. Go to him as you came to me when your homes were being put to the torch and your families massacred, and say, 'We name you for our leader.' But this thing I charge you to do: Take oath! Take oath that shall solemnly bind you together before God, maintaining your rights like men — not like slaves — until they are known and in justice granted by the king!"

There was no mistaking now the commotion in the crowd as it swayed and murmured confusedly. Standing in its midst, I quickly caught the key of its excitement, which was caused as much by the bruited report of the Indian outbreak as by the general's speech. Yet each exerted its own particular effect, and certain it is that they did not extinguish each other in passing. For, gathering force now as the speech came to a pause, the murmur of the crowd rose swiftly into a roar, and then broke out in a wild cry of "The savages! the savages!"

But the general either heard not the cry or dissembled mightily. For, not until the

Gloucester men drew up to the platform under their leader, Captain Brent, and began to urge the general to take quick action in their behalf, did he reply.

"You damned cowards!" he cried. "You dare come to me with your troubles after refusing to take oath like men? Look!" he continued, spreading a roll of paper before Brent's face, "you see here the names of all composing the army of Virginia save your own and that of your men. Have I not been urging you since early morn to sign this roll? And now, 'fore God, sir! I doubt not this be his vengeance upon you for such cravenness!"

"But our homes, general — our families!" I heard Brent urge. "What signifies the oath now?"

"And are your homes, your families, more to you than our own? By Heaven, man! if such be the feeling you have for us, in Gloucester, then away with you and your men! Begone! I say. We want none on this roll save such as stand for Virginia!"

At this plain talk some of Brent's men began to murmur, and Brent himself flushed mightily as the words struck him in the teeth. The general's party, moreover, such as had already subscribed to the oath, rallied quickly to his support, so that Brent's men were forced to give way, although with a bad grace. Yet the force of the Indians who had descended into

Gloucester being greatly exaggerated, — as is the tendency of such reports, albeit this one, as may be inferred, lost little in my repeating, — the men from that shire, numbering less than three hundred, were sore put to it whither to turn. But, after a hasty conference together, the general all the time preserving a lofty disdain, Captain Brent marched up to the platform and signed his name, and was followed in turn by all of his command. And so the ruse was effected.

Chapter XVII

In Accomack

WE made ready, then, to march into Gloucester that very night. All having taken the oath save Sir Henry Chicheley, who persisted upon deporting himself like a balky mule, and so was placed under arrest. And at this, I remember, he was greatly incensed; being left behind with a corporal and two men to escort him backward into Jamestown, to the shame of himself and in disgrace with all right-minded people.

And now a strange thing occurred. We had travelled steadily onward throughout the night, with the ostensible intent of doing battle with the Indians when we should come up with them. But this, I conjectured, might not occur for many a mile, the report of their presence having been started—as I have stated—by Captain Evelyn and myself. But shortly before sunrise we were startled by a man's riding swiftly towards us, and, as he came up, recognizing our leader, he gave a great shout. Upon this the general, seeing he had news for us, brought the column to a halt.

Doffing his cap respectfully as he came up,

he cried out, addressing the general: "I beg you, sir, quicken your march! The savages have surrounded the home of Master Pierson ten miles to the northward."

And so it is oftentimes with prophecy, for out of our necessities had come this substance. And whilst Captain Evelyn gave me a knowing look as we both glanced furtively at the general, I smiled to think how easy the first step, and how slight the transition from a liar to a prophet, so that — as in most sins, it is said — one may descend from one to the other with scarce a twinge of the conscience.

"Forward, march!" came the sharp command, and we were off at a quick pace down the road.

But I *will* chronicle no more Indian affairs. Albeit, so sore beset were we in those days that one could scarce turn round, even as I now can hardly take up my pen, without running full tilt into the midst of some horrible butchery that one would fain avoid. Therefore shall I take leave of this matter by stating that the army arrived at Master Pierson's in time to put the savages to flight, and that in a manner so thoroughly as to render further outbreaks of this band highly improbable.

A few days later the army was again quartered in Jamestown. The colony now being without a governor, the duties of the office devolved upon the general of the army until

such a time as the burgesses could meet and appoint one to act in his stead. For the general's time was occupied with the affairs of the army. Appreciating as he did the importance of keeping his men thoroughly disciplined and occupied in order to keep down the spirit of disaffection, a campaign was planned, soon to be put into effect, against the Indians infesting the shores of the Appomattox.

Matters were in this wise, then, as I sat one evening in Master Lawrence's ordinary, chatting with my friend and host, when General Bacon entered. No word had come from Accomack, whither the governor had gone, and, hearing us speak of this subject, the general said, —

"It gives me great concern, my friends, that Berkeley should be left to pout and plot to the comfort of his tricky heart over on the peninsula. Can you not devise some way to thwart him?"

"We might sink his ships and cut off his base of supplies, your Excellency," suggested Master Lawrence, in mock seriousness.

"Tut, man!" said the general; "too much has been done already to cut him off rather than hold him with us. No more of that, I pray you!"

After a moment's thought, Master Lawrence said, "Then why not, general, send after the old rascal, and fetch him back?"

"In sooth, gentlemen, such has occurred to me," replied the general; "yet I can hit on no way to effect it."

"Why, my friend," replied Master Lawrence, who was never at a loss in such service, "when the burgesses convene on the morrow pass a resolution that whereas Sir William Berkeley has deliberately removed himself from his divine office as the king's vicegerent, and whereas his present vacation and residence in Accomack being inimical to ourselves, we do beseech his return, &c., &c."

"Ah, very pretty, my friend," said the general incredulously. "And if he would be so ungracious as to decline this invitation of the burgesses, — and it is more than likely, — then what?"

"Why, then, sir," answered Lawrence with courteous facility, "you are the general of the army and have supreme jurisdiction."

"I know, I know, my good friend," answered the general. "I am to say 'come' and they come, or 'go' and they go. Yet am I in doubt what to propose in this matter." Then after a pause he went on: "Troops will be here from England in a few months, until which time Berkeley may well be left with his followers in Accomack. Come, say you not so?"

"Belike, sir," replied Lawrence, seeing the general's perplexity. "Yet I should propitiate his Majesty by at least inviting his agent's return."

"Well, then, Vivian," he cried with some impatience, turning to me, "will you carry a message to Berkeley?"

Though it was a commission I would gladly have avoided, I could do naught save reply, "Certainly, sir, if such be your pleasure."

Whence it was that on the following day, the resolution having been passed by the burgesses to the effect of Master Lawrence's suggestion, I was formally commissioned to bear it to his Excellency. In taking leave of the general, however, I was touched at his solicitude for me. Handing me a letter, he said, "You will see, Vivian, that I have addressed this to Colonel Ludwell, of whom I know you have the right to expect naught save a courteous reception in view of the timely service you rendered him at Curles."

Thanking him for his thoughtfulness in my behalf, I bowed, as he continued, —

"But should he or his Excellency so far forget himself as to take advantage of the truce you carry, or cause any harm to befall you, by Heaven! my friend, I'll hang the first officer of theirs that we catch, though it be Colonel Ludwell himself!" And with a warm clasp of the hand he bade me God-speed.

There being no vessel lying ready at hand in the river, arrangements were made for me to cross over with a party of fishermen who were returning to Accomack that very night.

Leaving shortly before sunset, we ran rapidly down the James with the wind astern; and though it was naught but a clumsy craft and my companions men ignorant of all save their calling, yet I did greatly enjoy the prospect of the green banks on either side, and the dancing motion of the boat as it careened to each fitful gust and buried its nose in the tide. For to one to whom motion in any of its varied forms is a sensuous delight, there can be little, to my mind, at all comparable to the joy of sailing. Nor is such delight a whit the less, if it be your privilege to sail between sunset and darkness with a straining sheet upon the bosom of a lake or river whose green shores are in easy view.

Darkness fell, with no sound to break the silence save the murmuring water rushing past the boat. Turning to the skipper, whose pipe glowed in fitful meditation, I asked if he could name the hour of our arrival.

"By nine o'clock, sir, belike," he replied.

"And the governor's quarters, my man, can you set me ashore near there?"

"Within an arrow's flight, sir," said he; "leastways I could have done so three days back. But he's a restless body, and peevish as an old hen without her chicks, so the Lord only knows where he be at this minute."

Whereat, apprehensive at his words, I asked quickly if he thought the governor intended leaving Accomack.

“He would that, sir,” he replied; “only he dare not trust himself in the crazy old hulk he came over in. But he keeps a signal flying at the point, where he hopes to hail some passing English craft.”

I conjectured, therefore, that I should arrive in good season; and, curling myself up in the stern-sheets, I was soon cradled into a sound sleep, from which I was scarcely aroused till after sunrise. But the wind had fallen during the night, and the Chesapeake lay calm and sparkling in the morning light. Only at intervals the vagrant breeze filled the sail for a moment and then died away, leaving it flapping in indolent protest. So it was somewhat later than the hour named by the skipper ere we finally hove in sight of the sandy beach, and discerned the banners flapping above the quarters of this bastard stem of the regular army of Virginia.

Running ashore at a point half a mile below, where our landing was concealed by a sandy bluff, I paid the skipper the amount agreed upon, and was leaving him, when he called after me, “Should you want our service again, sir, you can usually find some of us round the cabin over yonder,” pointing to a log hut a little distance back from the shore.

Not knowing what contingency might arise, I thanked him and passed on. But, coming shortly to an out-sentry, I answered carelessly

when challenged that I had come to speak with Colonel Ludwell. The man gaped at me a moment in surprise; there being none in Accomack save fishermen outside their lines, he may have misdoubted that I was the van of General Bacon's army which was about to encompass them.

"Colonel Ludwell, did you say, sir?" he asked presently.

"Surely, guard," said I. "Come, show me to him."

At this moment an orderly, stepping out of a cabin below and seeing the guard holding converse with me, approached and asked sharply what my business was. Whereat, repeating that I wished to see Colonel Ludwell, after a short deliberation he said, "Very well, sir; be so good as to come with me."

Thereupon I was conducted through the encampment to a building of fair size standing somewhat remote from the other quarters. Entering the doorway, the orderly knocked on a door opening to the right of the hall, and, receiving a response to enter, he held the door open for me to pass in, calling out, "A gentleman who wishes to see you, Colonel Ludwell."

The colonel was seated at a table writing, with his back towards me as I entered. Turning carelessly round in his chair, he suddenly recognized me and sprang to his feet, crying: "Good heavens, Master Vivian! what brings

you here? You of all men!" Then, without giving me time to reply, he added: "Tell me, my friend, is it about Mistress Langdon you have come? Has harm befallen her?"

I remember that it pleased me greatly to reply, "No, Colonel Ludwell, it is not on her account I am come."

"Ah!" said he, "it joys me to hear you say so, for I now infer that she is safe at Curles. But what the devil, sir," he continued, stepping across to the door and fastening it, "do you mean by thrusting your neck into danger in this manner?"

We were alone, the orderly having gone out as I entered. "I am come, sir," I began, "with a letter to his Excellency from the worshipful burgesses and general of the army."

"Humph!" said he, "and to what purport?"

"To solicit his return to Jamestown, sir, with all his following," I replied, "and promising protection and dutiful allegiance to himself."

"Go on," he said; "and what more?"

"That is all, sir," I replied in some wonderment at his manner.

"But you say nothing," he continued, "about Masters Bacon, Lawrence, and Drummond. Come! tell me, what do they say?"

"Why, sir," I replied, "they say naught especially, albeit it was chiefly to their solici-

tation that I was sent with this truce to his Excellency."

"Truce, man!" he cried contemptuously; "his Excellency recognizes no truce from rebels!"

"What's that, sir?" I retorted, in swift anger at his discourtesy as I heard the word thrown at me in reproach for the first time.

"Nay, my friend," said the colonel quietly, "I meant no reproach to you, though, were the messenger any one save yourself, I should say you were as soaked in rebellion as Dick's hat-band."

"And therein, Colonel Ludwell," said I after his own manner, "greater men than you or I may perchance differ. However," I continued, seeing him bite his lip in anger at my words, "I wish you to deliver, if it so please you, this despatch to his Excellency the while I await his reply."

"Impossible, sir!" said he curtly.

"What!" I cried, thinking I had not heard aright; "you refuse to be a mediator at a time like this?"

"I do, sir," he answered.

"Then, sir," I replied, my voice raucous with feeling, "may Virginia's woes henceforth lie on your own head! I have the honour, Colonel Ludwell, to wish you good-morning."

He bowed as I turned to the door; then, bethinking himself swiftly, he said, "One mo-

ment, sir, till I call my orderly to conduct you outside of the lines."

"I am obliged to you," said I coldly, "but there is no occasion to trouble yourself, as I must first see his Excellency."

"Ah," he sneered, "do by all means see his Excellency, and be honoured by being the first man hanged in this rebellion. He will no doubt be pleased to see you, sir,—the third door down the hall to your left." So, whilst he held the door open and smiled at me in a vafruous way that I little liked,—and for which supercilious punctilio I hoped some day to have back at him,—I inclined my head slightly and passed out.

But I had taken perhaps only a dozen strides down the hall when he cried after me, "Stay! Captain Vivian, one moment." Turning slightly about on my heel, I waited for him as he started to come towards me. "Sir," he said, "as you are bound to stick your neck in the noose, you may as well give me the message. Come! hand it me and I will place it before his Excellency."

Bowing slightly, and without a word, I placed the scroll in his hands. He looked at it for a moment, picked at the seal, and frowned. "Humph!" he said; "and where may you be found, Captain Vivian?"

"If it please you, sir, I will await his reply here," I answered.

"No, it does not please me," he said hastily, "and I greatly distrust it being to your advantage to do so."

Having no key to his meaning, I could do naught but stare at him, upon which he hesitated and made out as though he half repented of his intention to assist me. So that I answered: "My advantage, sir, has naught to do with the matter. Pray be so kind as to place the scroll you now hold before his Excellency the while I await his answer."

"Very well," he replied, "it shall be done, Captain Vivian. But as his Excellency is now busily occupied, it may be several hours ere he can consider this matter. I beg you, therefore, to wait outside the lines, and let my orderly bring you the reply at the spot where he found you this morning."

And so, though I little liked the delay, I could only bow my assent and pass out until the time set, the third hour after noon.

Returning to the hut which the fishermen had pointed out to me, I was fain to put up with the hospitality they generously extended, until the time would come for my departure. But it was with great impatience and much indignation, as I thought of how the message had fared thus far, that I made out to wait. For what manner of business, forsooth, could his Excellency be so absorbed in as to make his possible reconciliation with the army of but

slight import? And what meant that specific inquiry of Colonel Ludwell's relative to General Bacon and Masters Lawrence and Drummond? Nothing good, I conjectured; nor were my misgivings appeased by the low tones of the fishermen round me, who, knowing naught of the purpose of my mission, were muttering in disaffection at the governor's residence among them.

"His Excellency be that peevish," one of them was saying, "that when I took the morning's catch to his cook he came strutting round the cabin with his staff swung straight out and his back bent backwards like a chief's bow. Appearing to know me, — seeing as how I've been going there twice a day, — he came straight up to where I stood talking with the cook."

"'Fish?' says he, sniffing the air like a fine lady.

"'Yes, your Excellency,' says I, ducking my head, 'if it so please you.'

"'Please me!' says he, 'please me, you rascal! Have I not been faring on this disgusting refuse for a fortnight past? Begone! you son of Masaniello!' — that's what he called me, mates — 'I doubt not you're in league with the rebels to undo me!'

"So I ups with my basket and steers for home. Howbeit," he continued, puffing soberly at his pipe, "if that old turkey-cock chooses famine to good fish, it be his own doings."

After a brief pause my friend, the skipper, said, "It's a great pity, though; for the governor and his soldiers do eat a sight of fish, and pay good money."

"Drat their money, I say, and the fish, too!" retorted a youth. "With them out of the way, we could go on with our trading."

"Sh!" and they glanced over to where I was sitting, and then went on talking, but in tones so low I could not catch their significance. So that, seeing they distrusted me, and that they were honest fellows enough, from whom I could suffer no inconveniences by taking them into my confidence, I walked over to where they were engaged in mending their nets.

"Give no heed to me, men," said I reassuringly. "I came not on your affairs, but would have you tell me what you have learned of the governor's intentions?"

At this the young knave who had spoken so inhospitably of Sir William's presence, replied, "In good sooth, sir, we know little—the more's the pity!—save that an officer said to me only yesternight that they would belike remain till Christmas."

"Till Christmas!" I exclaimed in dismay. "But will not their supplies run out?"

"They would, sir," he answered; "but their ship ventured on a forage last night, across to Yorktown. If it makes port before sinking, they will likely be well supplied for a space."

“And the *Adam and Eve*?” I asked, seeing that he was well informed of the happenings round about, and wondering where his Majesty’s ship might be in this exigent. “You know, mayhap, where she has gone?”

“Surely, sir,” he replied readily enough; “she is standing off the Carolinas watching for traders, but is liable to call here at any moment.”

Bethinking myself quickly that the present time, when his Excellency was both short of rations and a serviceable ship, was of a nice propitiousness for the attainment of my mission, I thanked the men heartily and took my leave. As I went on to the rendezvous, it was with a hopeful tread, I remember, and the reflection that the turbulency of Virginia was shortly to cease. With the savages routed and driven out, there would be no more taxes imposed for the maintenance of worthless forts, so that the disbandment of the army might safely follow upon his Excellency’s return. For my heart sought peace; and why, forsooth, should aught but peace obtain in so resourceful a land? Even Sir William Berkeley, treacherous as he had shown himself to be in the past, must retain some vestige of honour intact; or, if not, he might surely delight in the novelty of such acquisition ere the blare of the trumpet summoned him to a long parade-rest in review to posterity.

"A message for you, Captain Vivian," said the orderly, as he saluted and handed me a missive.

"Ah! and what's this?" said I uneasily, as he handed me back the scroll as well.

"I do not know, sir," he answered courteously; "Colonel Ludwell ordered me to give it you."

Thanking him for his attendance, I turned back in the direction I had just come. But it was with grave misgivings that I glanced at the scroll, and as I examined it closer I saw that the seal had not been broken. Whereupon I looked at the address of the missive handed me, which I thought was intended for General Bacon, and read my own name instead!

Breaking the seal, I read, —

"Sir, — On second thoughts I must refuse to present this scroll to his Excellency, governor of Virginia. Believe me, sir, it would avail nothing and cause only mishap to yourself, whom I am under some obligation to protect. Having informed my men to arrest you on sight if you again venture within our lines, I remain, sir," — and with a glance at the signature I stood fixed in mingled anger and amazement.

Chapter XVIII

A Truce to His Excellency

IT is galling to taste defeat, and it is scarcely less so to record; yet I hold that failure is no proof of unfitness, there being oftentimes counter circumstances impossible to surmount. And despite the fact that I have tasted my share of the bitterness of failure, I am proud to say that I have ever felt in debt to the world, which gives so much and receives but a scant return at the hands of most of us. Wherefore it is that a gentleman should ever speak with equal frankness of his success or defeat; seeing that by one's failures and half-successes he derives much valuable experience that is invaluable to such as come after him; the which, I hold, is a thing that all generous and high-minded souls should never cease rendering up prayers for to Him who is the supreme instrument of it all. For what avail the curses? Albeit there can be no harm done if one, even whilst praying, grasps his hilt the tighter and takes solemn oath that henceforth no man shall foil him in the accomplishment of any worthy object lest he would feel the prick of your point.

It was in this mood, then, that I once more

spread out the crumpled paper and read those words with their strange mixture of gratitude and treachery, so that I found myself cursing him roundly one moment and thanking him for naught the next. And it was in this wise that I learned when on the king's business, or that of other high functionary, to waste no time and place no reliance on the intervention of courtiers, but to carry my petition straight up to the presence and there await my fate.

To this intent I again sought refuge among the fishermen until night, believing that then I might easily find my way within their lines and so place my petition directly before his Excellency. But in this I was deceived. There being no work of consequence for the governor's guard, Colonel Ludwell improved the occasion to keep his men thoroughly drilled, until they became—as I repeatedly saw from a safe distance—as nicely disciplined a lot of men as any officer would care to inspect. So that I prowled round the camp all that evening without discovering any point where I might safely run the guard. And the next night my success was no better; so, after vainly endeavouring for several days to succeed alone, I perforce saw fit to ask one of the fishermen to give me his assistance.

Beckoning Master Thomas, the free-trader, aside, I briefly explained what I required.

"An easy matter, sir," he replied, "seeing that their ship has not returned from York-

town. A bit of tobacco will open the way, whilst you slip through in the dark."

Going to a point nearest his Excellency's quarters, I waited at a safe distance behind and watched my chance whilst the smuggler hailed the sentry and held him in a moment's converse. Then, when the latter's back was turned, I passed swiftly by them without being challenged, and went on towards the house. The hour being past ten o'clock, I apprehended little difficulty now in gaining an audience; and, knowing the door of his Excellency's room that had been pointed out to me by Colonel Ludwell, I hoped that I should have merely to knock and it would be opened to me.

In this surmise, however, I was quickly disturbed. For as soon as I entered the hallway, — which was only after a swift glance adown its darksome confines, — I observed a guard, as he passed beneath a flare, pacing slowly towards me. Turning cautiously, I stepped softly back out of the doorway and waited a second in the shadow of the house. He came to the door and looked out, perchance only as a relief from his duty, or fancying he had seen some one, then turned, and I heard his footsteps slowly receding down the hall.

For several moments I stood there, whilst the guard came and went, vainly bethinking myself of some means to evade him. Finally, time being precious to me, — fearing that his

Excellency might soon be on the point of retiring if he had not already done so, — the next time the guard approached and turned to retrace his beat, risking everything to chance, I entered and followed after him.

Keeping about a dozen paces in the rear, I stepped with infinite caution in time to his own drowsy footfalls, but questioning, as I went on, if it were not a safer plan to pass swiftly to him and muffle my cloak over his head. Having no means of securing him, however, even if I succeeded in preventing an outcry, he would likely create such a disturbance as would expose me. So I put this idea quickly aside. Step by step, and I was within half a dozen paces of the door; the guard being about the same distance from the end of his beat down the hall. Reaching the door just as he was about to turn, I lifted the latch softly and, by good luck, the door yielded and I passed cautiously within.

An old man, his snowy locks falling in scholarly disorder over his head and shoulders, was sitting at a table on which candles were flaring, engaged in writing as I entered. Pages of manuscript, on which the ink was yet pale, lay scattered before him, and a pile of tomes, reaching level to his chair, stood by him on the floor. It was with no difficulty then, although his back was towards me, that I made out to recognize Sir William Berkeley, and to infer that, even in Accomack and the thick of his



“I caused him to turn and look up at me in surprise.”

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troubles, he had not failed to bring his household gods along with him.

So absorbed in his work was he — mayhap an essay or some bitter sophistry addressed to the king in denunciation of his enemies — that he failed to hear me enter. Whereupon, clearing my voice and stepping somewhat heavily towards him, I caused him to turn and look up at me in surprise as I came into the light.

“Well, sir!” he exclaimed in a voice between wonder and anger, “and who granted you permission to intrude?”

Bowing courteously, I answered, “Pardon me, your Excellency; I am come on an occasion too weighty to delay in seeking permission.” And, whilst he gasped in astonishment at my audacity, I placed the scroll gently before him.

To my own surprise, he glanced at it, but with an ill-favoured expression in which he vainly endeavoured to hide, withal, a peevish inquisitiveness. “Humph!” he sniffed, glancing at the seal, “some precious document, ’fore God.” But upon the gad, and with much arrogant bluster as though he would fain be quit of it all, he snatched it up and spread it open before him. Howbeit, as I watched him in the act, seeing the shaggy brows descend and knit together in a frown, whilst the thin lips grew tightly compressed after the manner I had observed at Master Bacon’s trial before the Council, I

greatly feared me that his Excellency's temper was unheavenly and portentous.

"You are Master Vivian, I believe," he said without looking up.

"Yes, your Excellency," I answered, inclining my head respectfully, though he did not look at me.

"And do you know aught of my niece?" he asked in the same manner.

"Yes, your Excellency, she is well and safe at Curles," I answered, wondering why Colonel Ludwell had failed to advise him to that extent, even though he were obliged to make known his encounter with me.

"Ah," he answered deliberately, ignoring the petition whilst he waited a space. Then, looking up at me and his eyes snapping angrily, he continued, "Well, Master Vivian, I am extremely glad to see you."

I bowed, muttering thickly, "You honour me, your Excellency." Albeit, I liked not his hard ironical tone.

"Twice you have foiled me, sir," he continued passionately, "and now that you have come with this insufferable petition, I shall let affairs take their rightful course."

"You do not accept the worshipful burgesses' petition, your Excellency?" I asked, though my heart sank at the futile question.

"Accept it!" he retorted fiercely. "I accept naught from rebels, sirrah; and, to prove to

you and your crew that such ye are, you shall be hanged to-morrow morning!"

Whereupon he sprang to his feet and made as though he would go to the door to call the guard. But, seeing that I was in for it, I quickly chose that if I were to hang it should not be without reason.

"Stop, your Excellency!" I said firmly. "I prythee stand where you are!"

He obeyed, but out of astonishment, I opine, whilst he gasped out: "You fool! You adventurous knave! You shall be hanged within the hour!"

"Not without violating the truce I came under, your Excellency," I answered stoutly, though in a voice so pitched that if the guard heard aught, it should only be the voice of Sir William Berkeley, perchance, spouting the lines of his favourite play.

Despite his age, however, he was quick as a cat; and, ere I understood the movement, maddened by my defiance of his supremacy, he had picked up his sword lying on the table; so that I perforce drew in hasty defence. Whereupon he struck at me in good earnest; but, though he was quick and skilled, his wrist was weak from age and slack training, and I sent his rapier flying to the ceiling in scant space. And there was no halting now. Ere he had time to cry out, I had caught him in my arms, and, with one hand clapped tightly

over his mouth, and forced to forget the reverence due his silver age, I deposited him in his chair somewhat more sudden than was his habit, I trust — but it was an ill occasion for courtesy. Then, with his own delicately scented kerchief, picked off the table, I proceeded to gag him and secure him to his chair, yet not without felicitating myself whilst doing so, I remember, on that which hitherto had proved an obstacle to my mission, namely, his Excellency's exclusiveness and the strict orders he was wont to give against interruption; for so far no alarm had been sounded.

Zounds! how he glowered at me! For this I should hang, and that speedily, unless I could effect my escape. To this end I quickly tried the outer door. But it was locked, and the key was not in its hole. I searched the table, scattering the manuscript lying there into greater disorder than before, but to no advantage. Again I sprang to the door and tried my strength upon it; but as it swung inwards I could not force it, and, thick-battened affair that it was, I saw no vulnerable point in it at any place.

Above the door, however, was a transom with iron bars set vertically and somewhat wide apart. By removing one of these bars, I conjectured that I might squeeze through. Bringing the table up to the door, I quickly mounted upon it and began wrenching at the centremost bar. And finally, with the leverage of my sword

hilt, I freed the lower end and swung it up out of the way, and was now ready to pass through.

Unbuckling my sword, I passed it through the transom, and had grasped the bars preparatory to swinging myself up. But at this moment I heard a sound in the room,—first a gasp, then a sputter, and then a loud, angry cry of “Help! guard!” and I knew at once that his Excellency’s kerchief had been of too delicate a texture to last.

In another moment I should have been through the transom; but this time my luck turned against me. I had squeezed one shoulder safely through, when the bar that I had sprung upwards fell down and held me as in a trap. At the same moment, the guard sprang into the room with a loud cry, and ere I could extricate myself from my position, he had caught me by the legs and dragged me to the floor with a violence that stunned me.

When I came to, two burly fellows were mounted on my chest, and my hands and feet were secured. His Excellency, his face white with anger at the indignity I had put upon him, was walking the floor excitedly, and crying out: “A rope! a rope, guards! Let the damned rascal be hanged this minute!”

The room was filling now, and everything swam before me dizzily as I gazed dimly round and realized my danger. I have only the consciousness remaining of rough handling, and a

string of ultra-modern oaths from the ultra-classic tongue of Sir William Berkeley as he continued to cry his wants to the guard. Yet it came as a brief respite to me when one of them answered, "We have no rope, your Excellency!"

"Then bring chains," he cried; "he deserves to be hanged in chains if ever a rascal did!"

"Nor chains either, your Excellency," answered the same voice in the same tone.

"How so? you knaves! How so? When we have a rebellion to quell, you have neither rope nor chains?"

"We have them, your Excellency, but they are aboard the ship," answered the guard again.

"Zounds! you fools! you call that having them?" he cried. "The next we shall hear will be that our ship is taken by the rebels, whilst I wait here and eat fish till some murderous knave is the death of me! Where's Colonel Ludwell?"

"At your service, your Excellency," answered the colonel respectfully, whose voice I heard, but whom I could not see.

"How did this scoundrel run the guard, sir?"

"It shall be investigated, your Excellency," replied the colonel.

"Do so, sir; I command you to do so!" continued his Excellency passionately. "And, hark ye! Colonel Ludwell—"

"Yes, your Excellency."

“Buy a rope, sir, — a league of it! and keep it convenient to hang every rebel in Virginia higher than Haman! Away with the knave, guard! See that he is hanged an hour after sunrise, if you have to fetch a rope from the fishermen!”

Following these instructions, I was dragged to a room opening off of the same hall-way, hurriedly thrown in without my hands or feet being freed, and the door slammed and secured behind me. For a space I lay there on the floor, too dazed to stir, the darkness ponderous round me. There was no window, no chink in the walls nor crack in the door, to admit so much as the dim light of a star or of the flare burning in the hall-way. Had not the thongs begun cutting my wrists, I might have lain there, too overcome to feel the desire of resistance. But as I slowly began to loosen them, the effort of doing so restored me to myself and dulled the sense of my impending fate. So that, after freeing my feet as well, I made search for the door, which I shortly found, and, by placing my ear to it, could hear the guard as he paced slowly to and fro. From this point I groped my way along the walls, counting the angles as I felt them until they numbered four; whence, assuming the room to be square, I knew when I had completed the round, and need make no further vain search for doors or windows.

Then for a space I stood at the door again, leaning against it and hearkening to the guard's footsteps, which in themselves formed a relief to the black silence of the room. And as he came and went, the idea grew fixed in my mind that here was my only hope of escape. Rolling my cloak into a pillow, therefore, I lay down on the floor close beside the door, and thought and schemed, but never quite despaired, until I at length lost myself in a weary sleep.

How long I slept, I had no means of telling; but I was awakened by a hurrying of feet and the sound of voices in the hall. I even detected the voice of his Excellency, which was not one whit modified from the angry tones I had lately excited. Then I heard the drums beat, and the officers crying out in loud tones as they passed in and out of the building. Bethinking myself that these preparations were mayhap intended for me, I arose and stood on my guard a little to one side of the door.

And I had not long to wait. The noise and hurry of feet had ceased, when I heard a key turn in the lock, and the door was pushed widely open. The bright daylight streaming into the room blinded me for an instant, so that I could see naught distinctly; then as I looked and was about to make a rush for the door, instead of a guard there stood Colonel Ludwell with his sword sheathed and hanging at his side.

"Captain Vivian?" he cried in courteous tones.

"Aye, Colonel Ludwell, at your service," I answered, stepping into the light.

"My God, sir!" he said rapidly, "I know not whether you be so much of a fool as I thought you last night, or a man of more courage than discretion. But look!" he cried, "look out there and you will see why it is I come to your assistance," and as I stepped gladly out into the hall, I looked out over the water in the direction that he pointed.

And lo! as I gazed, there rode four ships at anchor. They were lying close to the shore, their guns ranged so as to rake the encampment at a single fire. I was numbering the guns, and had made out over a dozen, when the colonel said, "You may thank your friend, General Bacon, for this deliverance, sir."

"What!" I cried in amazement, "do you mean to tell me that these ships belong to the army of Virginia?"

"To the rebel army, yes," he answered dryly. "His Excellency and the guard have fled to the rear, out of range."

A great joy filled my heart at these words, so that I paid little heed to the epithet Colonel Ludwell chose to apply to us. Sufficient to me it was, that from being a prisoner but a few short moments before, I was now in a position to command even the man at my side, whom

I well knew I had nothing to thank for my release. And yet, as the long-boat was now lowered from the largest vessel and, filling with men, began pulling steadily for the shore, I turned to the colonel with a smile that I could ill suppress, and, bowing courteously, I remarked,—

“The fortunes of war, you perceive, Colonel Ludwell; and rebels or not, the gods fight with us at present. But come, sir, I bear no grudge; and though I cannot call my orderly to show you beyond our lines, I trust you can find your own way out to your friends.”

He bit angrily at his mustache, as he replied, “I prythee, sir, do not concern yourself. Belike they come with a truce.”

“Ah, of a surety, sir,” I answered sarcastically; “and if there be aught under heavens that his Excellency and his followers do take delight in honouring, — when compelled to, — it is a truce!”

“Nay, my friend,” he protested; “be not so bitter. Did I not give you fair warning what to expect?”

“Then let me repay the debt, sir,” I cried in hot indignity at the recollection; “for what the devil cares a man for a truce after he’s hanged? And I say to you now, Colonel Ludwell, lest I should bear an obligation for your warning, to begone! Begone at once, else I will surely give you up to these men!”

He started suddenly at my words. But, though his face paled slightly, his eyes only flashed the harder, as he answered: "As you please, Captain Vivian. Howbeit, I shall remain; for the end is not yet."

Of Colonel Philip Ludwell's courage there was never a doubt in my mind; albeit his sword was ever enlisted on the side of royal oppression rather than that of patriotism. Yet it was with him, I trust, the fault of his temperament and the taint of blood that had long been accustomed to flow only in sympathy with the pulse of royalty; impelling the handsome courtier to bend the knee and bow the head with an instinctive "Yes, sire," however perverted the royal prerogative had become. A fine thing, no doubt, and there still be such in Virginia who hug themselves with this vanity; but to my mind—holding as I do that the monopoly of divine wisdom has become sadly run out through a long strain of kings since the days of Solomon—the possession of such a temperament is an inconvenient if not a sinful obstacle to the march of civility in a virgin country. For of men like Berkeley—and, I fear me, of Colonel Ludwell and his brother—Virginia has ever had a surfeit, and history even now records only a black mark to their shame. Yet others there were whose blood flowed every whit as blue, who, casting aside their yoke of bigotry, were proud to bear the

part of noble and fearless patriots. And of all such in general, and of Robert Beverly in particular, — who, strangely enough, was at this time a great favourite of his Excellency's, — it does greatly delight me to make mention and record my grateful homage.

Chapter XIX

His Excellency up Again

WHILST I waited there with Colonel Ludwell, the boat had made a landing and was now being drawn up on the beach. Thence, as the party of some half-score men came towards us, I recognized the faces of some whom I knew in the army, and among others that of Captain Evelyn. He halloed gayly on seeing me, and with scant respect to his superior, Colonel Bland, he ran up and embraced me with a fervour that a few days' absence could alone scarcely warrant.

Stepping to one side with him, whilst Colonel Bland and Colonel Ludwell were parleying, he began: "We became alarmed, Captain Vivian, at your prolonged stay. And when the second day went by without hearing from you, General Bacon commissioned Colonel Bland to get a fleet together and bring every dweller on Accomack back with him."

"Well, my friend," said I cordially, "the army of Virginia would have been short a loyal officer if you had come an hour later."

"The devil!" he cried. "Was the old scoun-

drel reckless enough to attempt that? Tell me of it, please!"

Whereupon I described as briefly as possible, and in a low voice, the experiences that had beset me, my companion alternately laying his hand fiercely on his hilt and again laughing in pure boyish deviltry at the figure I must have cut fencing with his Excellency and binding him in his chair. But it was ever like witnessing a play to tell a story to Captain Evelyn; for, with his quick, sensitive nature, he would grasp the words ere they were spoken, and enact in a manner, more French than English, the fearful course he would have pursued had the adventure been his own.

"And now tell me, my lad," said I, as I came to a close, "who is that man with gray locks speaking with Colonel Bland?"

"Why," he answered, as though every one were acquainted with him, "that is Captain Carver. A good, jolly old tar as ever lived. He has just returned from a voyage and was put in command of the ship."

"Ah, then this is not his own ship?" I asked in surprise.

"Bless you, sir; scarcely," he replied. "You see, we had no ship; so Colonel Bland boarded a vessel of ten guns lying in York River under the pretence of searching for contraband goods. The captain of the vessel, Larramore, was highly incensed and the

colonel was compelled to lock him in his cabin to cool off, whilst he made ready to put to sea."

"Very thoughtful of him, in sooth. And is he still confined?" I asked.

"Oh, no," said he; "he joined our party, and stands there now speaking with Colonel Ludwell."

I looked, but paid no attention, particularly, as we were starting to return to the boat. However, as I walked on ahead with Colonel Bland, telling him briefly of my experiences, I urged with great pertinacy that he hold Colonel Ludwell as a hostage and trust him no further than the length of his sword. This I did, not out of any disrespect to that gentleman, but because I had learned that the only way to treat successfully with Berkeley's party was to hold every advantage and trust naught to honour or word of mouth.

"Pooh, pooh," replied the colonel, waving his hand at me from within the circle of his conceit. And this was all. Albeit it was as if he had said: "Look on me, my friend, and fear not. I have the destiny of all Virginia within my arms and his Excellency himself sleeps peacefully in the hollow of my right hand."

Colonel Ludwell and Larramore brought up the rear, and Captain Evelyn was telling me as we approached the boat, how, after getting the

ship, they had picked up three other vessels so that they now mustered twenty guns altogether.

"A fine fleet, truly, for an exigent," I replied. Then, bethinking myself just as we were coming to the boat that I had left my pistols at the fishermen's hut, and that I ought not to leave without tendering thanks to the men for their rough entertainment, I stopped short in my tracks with an impatient exclamation.

"But you have plenty of time, Vivian," my companion assured me on learning my difficulty. "Pending the negotiations with the governor, do you go back and settle with your friends, and I will call with a boat and pick you up in the course of an hour."

Whereupon I bade him farewell; but some sudden feeling, I know not what it was, caused me to embrace him as I had done on his arrival. For the heart is soft when coming suddenly out from the gloom of impending danger and meeting again with friends. And he was naught but a light-hearted youth rushing headlong into the wars; and, although I had known him but a short time, I could not have felt more warmly towards him had he been my own younger brother.

"Good-by, my friend," he cried cheerily. "A half mile down the coast you say. Keep an eye out for me."

Without waiting to see them shove off, I returned first directly to the governor's quarters. Passing on to the side of the building, I came to the door through which I had so vainly struggled to escape the night before. But I was on the right side of it now, as I recalled, with a grim chuckle, the adventure; and, stamping among the rank weeds that grew close up to the walls, I was presently rewarded by stumbling upon my sword which I hung once more at my side.

As I turned to depart, I observed Colonel Ludwell walking rapidly back from the coast, and keeping on to the eastward, whither the governor and his guard had fled. Having ample time in which to perform my errand, I stood there watching him till he was met by a number of the guard about a quarter of a mile inland. For several moments they continued to stand there, grouped as though in consultation. But, fearing that some of them might be returning shortly to my own inconvenience, I retraced my steps to the coast and followed along under cover of the sandy embankment in the direction of the fishermen's lodgings.

I had covered about half the distance, mayhap, when I was met by Master Thomas, the trader. "Well, sir," he cried out as he greeted me, "you slipped through all right, I reckon. But look, sir," he continued, pointing back-

ward in the way I had come; "what are all these craft doing here?"

"That, Master Thomas," I answered, looking back, "is the fleet of the army of Virginia come to convey his Excellency back to Jamestown."

"And that party of men by the shore, sir, are they from the army?" he asked.

"Where?" said I, seeing no party there when I last looked. But now, a little below the spot where the ship had landed, I observed a party of full a score of men about to embark in a boat.

"This is strange," said I, as I thought that I distinguished the uniform of the governor's guard; "who take you them to be, Master Thomas?"

The boat had now been launched and was pulling rapidly towards the ship, as he replied, "It is the guard, sir, and the officer standing up in the stern appears like their colonel."

At this sight I was greatly astonished, thinking it a very irregular procedure for Colonel Ludwell to be visiting the ship with so many of the guard. I therefore walked back a piece, until I could command the ship in easy view. The boat had now come alongside, and, without waiting an instant, Colonel Ludwell sprang up the ship's side, and on to the deck, with the guard following close at his heels. Pointing his pistols at the head of the officer meeting

him, it was all as plain to me now as though I had heard his words, "Captain Carver, you are my prisoner," whilst the guard swarmed over the deck and took possession without a shot being fired.

Zounds! what a sight! what a thing for a soldier to witness standing there helpless on the shore, whilst a score of men boarded and captured the ship of his party, with one hundred and fifty men—as Master Evelyn had informed me—below the hatches! But there had been treachery here, of that I felt assured. And I at first blamed Colonel Bland, whom I had known as a man of haughty bearing, but talented and brave to a fault, so that it was hard to suspect him of this dishonour. Yet why, I wondered, had General Bacon, who was ever the tactful leader, entrusted this affair to any one save himself? For he alone, of all the men of the day, was able to fence successfully with his Excellency, Sir William Berkeley.

But there was naught to satisfy my impatient queries as I stood there between cursing and wonderment, blaming every one for a space, or all save Captain Evelyn. Alas! he was innocent enough of harm to any one. Yet I greatly feared me, unless his Excellency's temper had undergone some radical purification since the night before, that there was no safety for any captive who held a commission in the army of Virginia.

On the ship's deck all seemed so quiet and orderly, that I could scarce realize the sudden change in command that had so recently swept it; yet below the decks, I repeat, were six times the number of their conqueror, madly struggling and cursing, no doubt, on finding themselves duped and betrayed.

The following events of that day it is needless to detail; save that, at a later hour, Colonel Bland and Captain Carver were brought before his Excellency. There was no semblance of a trial even, and poor old Carver was made the first victim of Berkeley's hatred by being hanged in chains there on the Accomack shore. Whilst Colonel Bland, being a gentleman of distinction, was belike reserved for a similar fate on some later occasion.

About the third hour of the afternoon the *Adam and Eve* arrived, conveying a fleet of ten sloops. Whereupon I became greatly concerned at the necessity of my getting away from Accomack and carrying the alarm to Jamestown ere the governor's party should set sail. I engaged the smack, therefore; and, starting under cover of the twilight and sailing a good piece to the northward, we tacked safely round the fleet without being hailed. Then with a favouring breeze that freshened with every mile, we flew along on our course.

But all through the night I was restless and apprehensive, I remember, fancying that I could

hear the sound of the ships' bells behind us striking the hours, and seeing ever in my mind's eye the form of Carver dangling from its rude gibbet, with the reverend locks blowing wildly over the once merry face as though in impotent protest and rebuke to his pitiless slayer, Sir William Berkeley. For it was murder, as foul and contemptible a murder as ever was done; Captain Carver having been employed, as Master Evelyn had told me, simply as sailing-master under Colonel Bland, who held a commission in the regular army signed by Berkeley himself. "But rebellion, sir?" methinks I hear it urged. "The man was a dangerous and guilty rebel—" Faugh! say I. Out upon you for an emasculate stickler! For who made this army of necessity recoil into an army of rebellion, save Sir William Berkeley himself? And although I am running ahead of my tale, I cannot forbear to repeat right here the substance of a letter addressed to Secretary Ludwell by Lord Francis Morryson: "I fear that when the part of the narrative comes to be read that mentions the Gloucester petition, your brother"—meaning Colonel Philip Ludwell—"may be prejudiced, for at first sight all the lords agreed that this was the unhappy incident which made the war recoil into a civil strife, for the reason you allege that bond and oath were proffered the governor not against Bacon, but the Indians, confirmed

the people that Bacon's commission was good, it never being before disavowed by proclamation but by letters writ to his Majesty in commendation of Bacon's acting."

When day broke, my fears of the immediate return of the governor to Jamestown were fully realized; for, far down the river, I could see the tall masts with their sweep of white canvas gradually approaching and gaining on us at every mile. But we were now nearly up with the island, and I hoped still that I should have time to give warning that would suffice the army to prepare. So, coming presently to the landing, I hastily settled with the fishermen, and hurried on to Master Lawrence's ordinary.

No one was stirring about the place as I approached, it being a good hour before sunrise. Going on to the door I knocked loudly with my hilt, but at first roused no one but the village watchman; who, being of that serene age scarce likely to lie awake a-nights with his mind distraught of the times, was stealing the early hour for an innocent nap on the porch.

"Up, watchman!" I cried, as he opened his eyes and looked at me in a dazed manner. "Be off, and arouse the town. The governor is returning with Colonel Bland and all his men prisoners!"

"O lordy, lordy, sir!" he cried, rising as

quickly as his years would permit and seizing his pike, on the end of which his lanthorn still flared. "How far from Jamestown did you say they be, sir?"

"Far?" I cried. "Nay, man; belike a mile — a half mile, a quarter! Run, I say; run for your life, and warn the people!" And again I knocked vigorously with my hilt.

Then followed two noises in rapid succession. The first proceeded from the raising of a window above the porch and the voice of my good friend Lawrence crying out, and the second from the watchman's stumbling headlong down the stairs and sprawling at full length on the ground. "O lordy, O lordy," he kept crying in sheer distraction as I raised him helpless to his feet. Whereupon I cried out upon him in good earnest.

"The devil!" said I, shaking him slightly. "Where are your wits, man? Find them, sir; find them, I say, ere the governor gets you and hangs you higher than Captain Carver!"

"Ha, Vivian!" cried Master Lawrence, leaning out of the window in his night-robe. "How it joys me to welcome you back! But what's that you said about Captain Carver?"

"I said, sir," I answered rapidly, "that he is hanged, and that Bland and his men are all prisoners. I beg you, sir, hasten; for the governor is approaching with the entire fleet scarce a mile away."

"Ah," he answered, stroking his chin in meditation, "'tis bad, sir; very bad."

"And is General Bacon stopping with you, sir?" I asked, impatient at his slowness.

"Nay, my friend," he answered, "he is gone; marched away day before yesterday."

"Alas! Master Lawrence—" but, ere I could finish, another night-gowned figure came and leaned out of the window, and I was obliged to repeat to Mistress Lawrence all that I had just said to her excellent spouse.

"Oh, god-'a-mercy, Master Lawrence!" she cried, in quick gasps of scornful impatience; "by my faith, sir, you have—you have ruined us now with your eternal politicks! Everlastingly talking politicks, I say, sir,"—catching her breath,—“until—”

"Chut! my dear," he expostulated; "softly, softly. Why, I've not spoken politicks since last night."

"Insolence!" she retorted, her breast heaving; and she was off again into another tirade ere, betwixt my alarm and impatient amusement, I could find words to halt her.

"But madame, madame," I cried finally; "see, the fleet is even now coming up the river."

At this, glancing towards the James and seeing the ships standing up the river, she withdrew her head with a scream, dragging her husband after. He reappeared directly, how-

ever, crying out to me, "Kindly order my horses for us, my friend, and tell the boy to prepare the roan for yourself."

"What!" I cried in astonishment; "do you intend flight, Master Lawrence?"

"Perforce, sir," he answered. "We can make no defence and must be off till the army returns."

By this time the town was wide awake and the people beginning to scatter in every direction. The *Adam and Eve* had come to anchor, and a boat was putting out for the shore when our horses were at length made ready and brought to the door. It was high time that we were off, if we contemplated flight, methought, when Master Lawrence and his mistress emerged from the ordinary. But, as he held her stirrup for her to mount, she suddenly bethought herself and cried out: "Oh, the plate, Master Lawrence! God'-a-mercy, we have forgotten to fetch it!"

"Ah, my dear," he replied gently, continuing to stoop as he held her stirrup, "it was very thoughtless in me, I declare; upon my faith it was."

"Thoughtless, sir!" she exclaimed in tones of frantic disgust. "And all that beautiful plate that my first husband bought, and brought over from London for me, is to be left behind? By my faith, Master Lawrence, as I'm a Christian, you would fret a saint!

But go fetch it, sir. Quick! whilst we wait."

Well, well; Heaven knows I pitied the good dame, and it is far from my intention to make light of her distemper. For I well remember the extent and costliness of her plate, than which his Excellency himself could display no handsomer; and it must have pricked her mightily to think of it being left behind as a temptation to his arrogant rapacity. Feeling this, I was on the point of dashing into the ordinary and fetching for her all that my arms could hold, when Master Lawrence spoke out.

Raising his eyes from the ground, it may be that he saw the guard approaching, — for the boat had landed, — or it mayhap was only the unpleasant shade of her first husband putting in an ill-timed appearance; the which, I opine, must ever be a sore trial to the present incumbent if he be a gentleman of honour, such as no woman of an affectionate heart would willingly inflict save on occasions of grave moment. At any rate, his tones were somewhat chill as he replied, "Mount, I prythee, my dear; lest you would see me swing for it ere night."

Whereupon we mounted without further murmuring, albeit the guard caught sight of us hurrying up the road, and a musketoon rang out behind us as a bullet cut the branches of a tree to our right. But we sped straight on

over the sandy neck, and were soon caught up with the parties that had fled in advance of us.

"Where may General Bacon and the army be found, Master Lawrence?" I asked, as we were approaching Green Springs.

"They marched to the southward, belike along the Nottoway or the Roanoke," he answered. "'Tis a thousand pities, Vivian, that the old rogue does not unite his forces with the Indians. Then we should not be warring at odds betwixt the two."

Nodding my assent, I replied, "By your leave, Master Lawrence, I shall now hurry on to join the army, — if I may ask the loan of your nag?"

"Certainly," he answered. "He is yours, my friend; keep him as long as you choose. We shall pay a visit to Shirley."

So, with his voice that was joyous still in the midst of adversity ringing its God-speed in my ears, I galloped ahead, and turned in once more at Green Springs. And ah, the sight of it again, — and the memory! Small wonder that it was sweet to me, my life hitherto knowing naught of such sensation for which a soldier following the wars has but scant space. So that, if I halted a moment at the porch and fancied that again I saw my lady standing there in the starlight, misdoubting her right to enter and turning wistfully to me for counsel and protection, I trust there may be some who will

understand that a soldier may sometimes taste such sentiment without his arm being charged with effeminacy.

I could not go by the house without being forced to dismount by the clamour that beset me; and, whilst the good souls fetched me of the governor's choicest cuts and his finest old Madeira, they plied me with queries of Mistress Langdon, and crammed my haversack at the same moment. So that, with such finesse is hospitality dispensed in Virginia even by the servants, in the combined fulness of my heart and the gratefulness of my appetite, I began to misdoubt whether the estate was still the property of his Excellency, or had become magnanimously transferred by him to myself.

Nor did it require any persuasion to again engage Moses to ferry me over the river; whence I pushed steadily on to the southward. Coming to the Blackwater, I crossed at the first convenient point, then followed down its course for a way, as it flowed in beautiful falls and gathered its forces anon into limpid pools betwixt rocky embankments, silver in the sunshine, but silent and sombrous when shadowed beneath the cypress.

But it was night and morning again ere I came up with the army along the shores of the Roanoke. And at the news I brought,—albeit I at first could not make him comprehend its truth,—Master Bacon swore a great oath in

sounding picturesqueness of Colonel Bland and the nether regions in one and the same breath.

"And Carver hanged, did you say, sir?" he asked.

"Yes, Master Bacon," I replied quietly.

"And the lad, Captain Vivian; did you see aught of him?"

"Sir," I answered, "I conversed with him a scant hour before the ship's capture. But he is now biding his chance with the rest."

"Then by the eternal, my friend, there's naught but a fight will save us now." And so saying, with a ringing speech to his men, many of whom were reduced to such straits as to be without shoes or a sufficiency of clothing, and with a hundred or more Indian captives in the van, the army of Virginia took up its homeward march.

Chapter XX

The Passing of Master Bacon

TO detail the difficulties that confronted us upon our return would be to no purpose, the facts being trite enough now. How, finding the peninsula obstructed by a palisade, we constructed a circumvallation round the governor's outworks, working mostly by moonlight and making our camp in the deathsome marsh, till we were able to mount our cannon where they commanded the shipping. Strange, in sooth, it may seem, and even stranger to me as I mention it now, that all the while our work was progressing we had but one sortie to repel. And this we did, causing the motley of fishermen, guards, and indents to fly in confusion, leaving their drum and their dead behind them.

The second night thereafter the governor and his party took flight without our being apprised, embarking on board their ships with their families, captives, and all their belongings—including Dame Lawrence's plate—and returning again to Accomack. Learning of this nigh daybreak, we entered the town and at the general's order—he being determined that the

good town should shelter no more traitors—we applied the torch that razed it to the ground. And there, as the smoke arose and blended into the morning's gray, it appeared but a melancholy end of that which had been the very cradle of life and liberty in America—a land that some day, methinks, shall symbolize freedom to all the world. "So much," quoth Master Lawrence with his torch in his hand, "for liberty in Virginia, whilst Nero goes fishing in Accomack."

Not many days after the occurrences just narrated, a courier arrived from Gloucester bringing word that Colonel Brent had organized his forces and was preparing to attack the army. Whereupon we were once more commanded to march, and, crossing the York at Ferry Point, advanced into Gloucester. But scarcely had we made good our entrance ere the great body of Brent's men deserted and joined our forces, whilst their colonel and a few supporters retreated to their homes, mightily chagrined.

But the days of our encampment in the marsh surrounding Jamestown had begun to tell with direful expression on our general's health. He became seized with a low fever, but of such slight significance, it at first seemed, as not to warrant even a temporary retirement from command. As the days went by, however, he grew changed and irritable; his self-

command being wont to flow from him even whilst he spoke, and, should any controversy arise over some trivial event, the affair was now likely in his mind to assume the proportions of some gigantic conspiracy to effront his authority.

One night as I was sitting with him in his tent whilst encamped near Middle Plantation, our conversation by chance reverted to the governor and affairs at Accomack, whence we were expecting a courier to arrive with news at any moment. "Of all the work that has been done by the army, Vivian," said the general, "that affair at Accomack alone remains as a foul blot."

"Yes, Master Bacon," I answered quietly; "a great pity it was, to be sure."

"Pity, sir!" he retorted impatiently. "Pity! why, man, where were your eyes when Ludwell was plotting with Larramore?"

"Where were my eyes, sir?" I cried in amazement betwixt his tone and manner of holding me responsible for that disaster. "Why, General Bacon, you do forget—"

"Forget, forget!" he exclaimed angrily. "Nay, sir, I can forget naught; and surely not that two hundred and fifty stout men made a cowardly surrender to Ludwell's two dozen. 'Fore Heaven, sir, when I gave out my commissions, methought I was granting them to men who'd not betray me. Yet how was I

befooled! Come, tell me, Master Vivian, how much were my officers paid by his Excellency on that occasion?"

"Sir," I cried out, stung to the quick by the implication, "if you mean to couple my name in this charge—"

"Well, sir, and if I do?" he exclaimed passionately, springing to his feet, and laying his hand on his hilt.

And so suddenly had our altercation flared up that the next moment we stood confronting each other with drawn swords. But as I looked upon the man standing before me, noting his flushed face and matted locks, with the consuming fire smouldering in his dark and melancholy eyes, my heart smote me as I recalled the fine and vigorous poise of my commander and generous friend of a few weeks back, changed, alas, into this shattered form. So that, flinging my sword far from me,—and I yet remember watching it fall upon a mean and rumpled pallet upon which the general had been tossing at intervals through the day,—I replied,—

"Nay, sir, what need I to say the charge is false? Have I not done your will on all occasions? And as for pay, sir, let my own purse bear witness to my villainy. For naught has it received, and somewhat has it freely disbursed for service in the cause of Virginia. And would you still what price your officers

received, then bethink yourself, sir, of the fate of Carver, and judge how many now await their pay in like coin for the risk they ran."

"Oh, stay! spare me, my friend," he protested wildly; but ere he could add another word a bugle sounded close by the tent, and the courier from Accomack entered. Turning to him, the general asked hopefully, "What news, my lad; what of our friends?"

"Nothing but ill, your Excellency," replied the courier grimly. "Captain Evelyn and two of our men have been hanged, and Colonel Bland is now standing trial before the same court."

Following upon the excitement of our dispute, and in the hour of his ebbing vitality, these words seemed to crush him as a blow unguarded. And whilst he stood there a moment, dazed and lax, I observed him totter, and he would have fallen had I not caught him in my arms.

"Go," said I to the courier. "Return in an hour's space for your orders." This I commanded, knowing that to expose the weakness of our general to common eyes would tend shortly to deplete our ranks. Then, as the courier saluted and withdrew, I continued: "I beg you, General Bacon, to rest yourself for a space, and be quit of these cares. Let me assist you to lie down."

He complied like a child, lying quietly

on his pallet for several minutes without a word, but gazing out open-eyed, and thinking, I knew not whether of the past or future, until he finally spoke.

"My friend," said he hoarsely, "I entreat you to forget this scene. Be so kind as to recall it only as a vagary of the illness that is destroying me. What think you, Vivian; should I resign command?"

"O sir," I replied, touched at the pathos of his tone, "do not think in such wise. In a few days you will be able to resume your duties; but until then, I prythee, rest yourself, sir."

For an instant he turned and looked at me, —a yearning, anxious look, followed swiftly by one of peaceful repose. Such as, methinks, for its passing sadness, only the face of a youth can know who finds himself with his battles unwon and still trembling in the balance, his body fallen hopelessly ill, and his very soul crying out for respite and release from its weight of worldly cares, that it may prepare to stand surrendered to the Great Commander. For there was no concealing the fact any longer of the gravity of his illness; and though I sought to chide him of his apprehensions for a space, whilst I sat there with him awaiting the courier's return, I fear me that my words were of but scant avail.

"Promise me, Vivian," said he quietly, "that

should aught happen to me, you will see my dear mistress safely to her home in England. Tell her that such is my wish ; for not even a woman is free in Virginia from the vindictiveness of Berkeley."

"Your slightest wish, Master Bacon," I replied, "shall be as a command to me at all times."

"No, no, not that, my friend," he answered. "Heaven knows I should not willingly detail a man from our little army, were there any other whom I could trust. But of Mistress Langdon," he continued with a smile at me, "what of her, Vivian ? Might she not be wanting to quit Virginia ?"

"Perchance, sir," I answered, perceiving now why he had so put the matter, making it the easier for me to quit the army without scrupling, should my own interests so prompt me, by requesting me to attend upon his mistress. "But she is one who best knows her own mind, Master Bacon."

"Surely," he assented ; "and yet, if need be, I should have you urge it upon her to leave Virginia until her uncle's rule is ended. And it were well that she place her property interests in the hands of my solicitors until our present troubles are adjusted."

In this wise we chatted, although with many an exchange of kindly, heartfelt words, that does now greatly joy me to recall, but which

there can be little credit or sincerity in recording. For to jot down a word or more were an easy matter, yet who shall express those subtle meanings by which we oft converse—a common thought, a glance, a clasp of the hand—in the gloaming of love or life, by a series of letters and grouping of halting sentences, without doing an injury to its memory and sincerity? The poet, perchance; but not a plain Virginia planter.

And so the hour slipped by, and my friend had fallen into a quiet nap when the courier returned to seek his orders. Then, having persuaded the general to keep to his tent for a space, and bearing a message to Colonel Ingram to assume command, I took my leave. The hour was still early, however, the young moon just dropping its crescent into the westward forest, as I was returning slowly to my own quarters past the general's tent. Mayhap it was the hour I had just spent, the message I had borne, or the clear cognizance of the sudden danger now confronting us in the loss of our commander, that seemed to send my thoughts whirling vividly back over the past few months. And, though I have but scant patience with a gypsy's idle jargon,—howbeit the lass was pretty,—in some manner her words returned to me with ominous significance: "When the October crescent seeks rest in the westward forest—" and I would that I had not silenced her.

I had gone but a few paces beyond the general's tent when I met Master Lawrence face to face, he having been with the army since the burning of Jamestown. For a time we stood there conversing together on various matters of import, and I was about replying to his query of how I had left the general, when we were startled by the report of a pistol coming from the direction of the tent, followed by a sharp cry and then a sudden hush.

"My God!" cried Master Lawrence, as we started to run back, "what can this mean?"

Coming to the tent, we were about to enter, when we stumbled over a silent form lying just without the entrance. Hastily kneeling, I turned the body as it lay there face downwards, until the features were revealed by the light shining through the tent.

"The courier from Accomack! Go in," I cried out to Lawrence.

When we entered, we found him sitting there on the edge of his pallet, pale, and gasping for breath, with the pistol still clutched in his hand. He was muttering confusedly to himself, and seemed not to recognize us as we gently disposed him upon his pallet in a comfortable and orderly manner. By this time others had approached, and, on examining the body of the courier, they found a bullet-hole in his side, where the ball had sped straight to the heart. In his hand he still grasped a slender poniard,

and there was a slight cut on his face which may have been done by it as he fell forward with his arms thrown upwards.

These, then, are all the facts of this strange occurrence, on which speculation is yet rife. You may hear, perchance, that the man was hired by his Excellency to assassinate General Bacon, and certain it is that none of the Royalists ever took occasion to allay such suspicion. Neither would such an act, as some affirm, be wholly impossible to a man of Sir William Berkeley's temperament, as witness his vindictive and ferocious spirit in the days that followed. Albeit I neither charge nor defend; and, that gentlemen of honour may make their own deductions, I should in all fairness add that there was no sign of a wound on the body of our general, and that this affair — however unlikely it may seem to his friends — may have been naught save a private quarrel between himself and the courier.

But there can be no doubt that it hastened his end; for from this excitement he passed into a delirium and swift decline wherein all our efforts to rouse him were of no avail. Ere two short days had passed, the generous soul, the fiery, unquenchable spirit of our friend and leader, had taken its flight, and the army of Virginia, fighting its first battles against Old World oppression and tyrannical misrule in America, was as though it never had been.

it was only by the merest chance that we avoided being cut in two by the prow of a large vessel that we met standing up the river. As the fog lifted a second I discerned the name, *Adam and Eve*, and the next moment we were hailed.

"What is it, Captain Vivian?" asked my lady, as the fog settled down again in a gray wave.

"Hush!" said I in a low voice, jamming the tiller hard a-port, and causing the sail to fill out and speed us silently away.

Not a moment too soon, however; for, hailing us again and getting no response, there came a quick flash and a roar as a ball went ricocheting athwart our bows. But they were firing at random in the fog, and I had little apprehension that they would risk another shot at us, for we were now dodging in and out amidst the consorts of the fleet. By this I saw that his Excellency was again returning to Jamestown; and, though I had feared that we might be forced to run a blockade at the mouth of the river, I had planned to arrive there under cover of the night. Meeting the fleet at this point, however, there was naught but the rack to save us from discovery; and as it rolled up from the sea in sudden fitful gusts that opened and closed alarmingly as the morning sun flashed through and was again obscured, it may well be opined that I could scarce keep my seat for

nervousness until we had rounded a curve, and a high embankment hid us from view of the fleet.

But from here on to the Chesapeake was open sailing. Our hope had been to hail some passing ship bound for England, but as all commerce and trade had come to an end during the war, we sighted no vessel on which we could take passage. Hence heading the sloop up the bay, and not wanting to risk a landing or an indefinite stay in Virginia, we continued on to the town of Baltimore. Here we were received with such kindly hospitality that, after finding the ladies comfortably housed, though being informed that many weeks might pass ere a vessel would arrive from England, I could no longer excuse my absence from the army. For three whole days I wandered about the town and sat idling on the quays, wondering vaguely if my promise to Master Bacon, now that his mistress' safety was assured, could not in all honour be forgotten for a space whilst I rejoined the army and helped to fight our battles to a finish.

As I sat late one afternoon watching the November twilight deepening over the bay, I was so intent on this thought that I failed to hear the approach of any one coming up behind me, until a voice greeted me with, "How now, Master Vivian, are you still watching for a ship to arrive this day?"

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Recognizing the voice, I arose hastily and bowed. "Nay, my lady; nor for many a day, I fear."

"Ah," she answered, "you speak as though you would fain be quit of your charge. Yet by my faith, sir," she continued, in a sudden independency of manner such as was wont to become her mightily, methought, "I'd have you know that, whilst you sit moping by yourself, we are well able to take care of ourselves, Master Vivian."

"'Fore Heaven," I replied, with a smile at her cool assurance, "mayhap you will then be pleased to relieve me of my sword, Mistress Langdon, the while I return to less fearsome pursuits in the army?"

To me her manner of late had lacked the frankness of a few weeks back; and now, scanning me sharply an instant, she asked, "Do you mean it, sir?"

"O, my love!" I exclaimed, in swift impatience at her misdoubt of me and the vain constraint I was under, "how can I mean else when it means so much?"

Placing her hand in mine, the gray eyes glinted with a pleasure that was almost fierce in its intensity, as she answered, "In that case, Captain Vivian, do you keep your sword, and I would it knew no sheath till every Royal traitor be driven out, or our cause go down in darkness."

And again, ere I could reply, she added, —
“It is what I hoped for, but could not ask.”

“Brave little heart,” I answered, and I sealed my promise to her with a kiss. “God grant a speedy end to this conflict, and that I may shortly return.”

“And if not, sir,” she added fervently, though I felt a tremble against my arm, “or, hearing the end, the days pass on without your returning, may I have grace to remember that others have done no less.”

Chapter XXI

Terms of Surrender

ON the following day, with the sloop generously placed at my disposal, I set sail for Virginia. Landing at a convenient point off the Gloucester coast, I bade the servants return with the craft to Baltimore, and made the best of my way cross country to the army. Here matters were faring but ill since the death of the general, defeat following defeat in spiritless alternation. Yet it is not my purpose to detail here the trials that beset us from now on, until the arrival of his Majesty's fleet late in January. Suffice it to say, therefore, that our cause gradually crumbled and fell to pieces, as much from want of concert as from the fear inspired in our ranks by the ferocious treatment accorded our men when captured.

"Your Excellency," pleaded the wife of Major Cheeseman, as she knelt before him, "it being because of my urging that my husband joined the army, I prythee let the punishment fall upon me."

"Strumpet!" he cried out upon her, forgetting that he had ever been a gentleman, "I

promise you the vile knave you name 'husband' shall be well rewarded!"

Master Lawrence had already fled into Carolina, when his friend Drummond was captured in the Chickahominy swamp. "You are very welcome, Master Drummond," said Berkeley; "we shall be quite ready to hang you in half an hour." But afterwards, when their property was confiscated by his Malevolency, and Mistress Drummond and her wee children turned helplessly adrift in the world, a cry went up from that noble dame that echoed across the Atlantic, even unto the ears of the Lord Chancellor, whilst he said, "I know not whether it be sinful to wish any person alive, otherwise I could wish Sir William Berkeley so, to see what could be answered to such barbarity: but he has answered it before this."

Whilst gibbets were groaning in every shire, General Ingram finally accepted terms of surrender for the army. Yet there were few of us who cared to trust ourselves in Berkeley's power, even under the truce of these articles. In company with a few comrades, therefore, I turned my back upon Virginia for what I thought would be the last time, and made my way with great stress over the queachy fens of the tide-water country, to the less inhospitable shores of Maryland.

Early in the spring of '77, I finally reached Baltimore, having been absent well-nigh five

months without hearing a word from the little party I had left behind. Neither had there been any opportunity to advise them of my welfare; so that, whilst I proceeded first to mend my appearance by making such purchases as the state of my purse would permit, I did not neglect to include one or two little knick-knacks of pleasing femininity, such as a woman loves to deck herself with upon a lover's return.

It was shortly past the hour of seven, methinks, and the little town lay peaceful and serene in the veiling twilight, as I took my way adown a pretty street, where the trees fringing the walk were just bursting into leaf. An errant robin, I remember, belated in home-seeking, or of an adventurous habit, chirped doubtfully at me in the branches above; but withal there was a sympathetic courage in his note as I stopped for a moment in front of a great brick house, which I at last made out to be the place I sought. Mounting the steps of polished stone, I stood waiting a moment at the door to catch my breath — that was strangely lost all at once in the laborious task of climbing those stairs, belike — ere I let fall the knocker.

The door being presently opened to me, even whilst I entered I discerned a woman's figure in a soft trailing gown beginning to descend the gliding stairway. But the hall was dimly lighted, and though I glanced as closely at her as I well could without rudeness, it was

not till she had arrived at the last stair but one that my heart gave a glad leap, and, stepping swiftly forward, I seized both her hands and knelt on the stair at her feet.

"Hush!" she said softly, her voice wavering between pleasure at my coming and sorrow at the news I brought, as she bade me rise and kiss her lips. "You need not tell me of the cause that's lost. For never, sir, until the king declares it to my face, will I confess it such — a mere rebellion fought without avail!"

And though my return brought the smiles back to her face for an idle hour, whilst we talked in lighter vein, and, I fear me, in words of such slight significancy as were but futile to record, I yet misdoubted that my little rebel was not appeased. For, however hopeless the cause seemed to me, her woman's spirit was still unconquered.

"Methinks you set less store than I, sir, at the news you bring."

"May Heaven pardon me if, indeed, your words be true, my love," I protested. "Remember, I prythee, that when a man has fought for months against almost daily defeat, the end, perchance, does less overwhelm him than were the blow to fall all at once."

"Forgive me, sir," she replied quickly; "I know 'tis true as you say. But it means so much to me that mayhap I shall never return to Virginia."

And may God forgive me if, in the fervency of that moment, I took her in my arms and promised passionately, as only a lover may, to do for her more than is possible for man ever to do for woman short of a miracle. Yet spoke I not in a mere improvidency of words; for news had come to my ears with the coming of the king's ships from England, by which I conjectured that events were so shaping themselves whereby even a soldier of fortune who drew a good sword could yet win for himself a fair name, and a goodly share of the world's largesses.

Thus it was that when Mistress Bacon came into the room, and after greeting me cordially, said, "Mayhap, Master Vivian, had you not come this night, you might have found your charges grown weary of waiting, and even now sailing for England."

"Nor is it yet too late, sir," added my lady in sudden raillery; "for did not Master Barton say to us that his brig would sail with the tide this very night?"

"Master Barton?" I repeated, in surprise at hearing a name mentioned for almost the first time since my landing at Jamestown.

"The owner of the ship, sir; you may know him perchance?" asked Mistress Bacon eagerly.

"That I do, madame," I replied heartily; "and if it be truly the Master Barton of my acquaintance, you would yet do well to sail with him."

So, taking my leave shortly, — far sooner, I fear me, than I should else have done had I not learned this news, — I proceeded straight to the quays. Nor was I disappointed on finding the rumour true, and being embraced most cordially by my friend Barton on the decks of that same brig whose possession I had helped to fight for scant a year ago. So that, when I spoke of sailing with him that very night, he did manifest so much delight at my proposal that I could scarce say which one of us was asking or which granting a favour. Howbeit, when I made mention of the ladies that would accompany us, then, indeed, did he protest — whilst giving me the brig — that I was forever heaping favours upon him that he would never be able to properly repay.

“First you pick me up in London, my friend,” said he, “save my throat from being cut, then find me a vessel with which I proceed at that time to lay the foundation for a very comfortable fortune, — very comfortable, sir, by my troth!” he repeated, expanding his chest and slapping his doublet. “And now, not content with that, you must needs honour me by fetching aboard my brig yourself, your lady-love, and her friend — a widow, too, as I’m a Christian! said you not so, my friend?”

Suchwise, then, did we come to sail that very night, after a most kindly and unwilling farewell from the hospitable Baltimore family,

whose name I shall not mention lest I should embarrass their modest, generous hearts. And though our hearts were sore, these friendly scenes did make to mightily balm their wounds. And throughout the voyage, Master Barton continued to favour us with such little attentions as served to make the passage seem but like one long holiday. Insisting, also, that I should recount to him my adventures in Virginia, and learning that I was without any regular commission assured me, he offered me an interest with him in his trading enterprise. But though I thanked him warmly for his good will, I had no intent to embarrass him with my inexperience by accepting his good offices.

“Remember, my friend,” he urged, as we were quitting the ship on arrival in London, “whenever I can serve you, I shall be joyed that you command me.” And, with many a courtly leave-taking of the ladies, he cried after us a joyous God-speed.

Now after being in London a matter of some three weeks, a strange thing occurred that I still recall with much wonderment. Nor is such unmixed to-day with a little shame, when I reflect on how near I came to never returning to Virginia. But to explain. I have stated that I had heard hopeful reports — to a soldier — before quitting Virginia. Early in February, Louis had taken the field and laid siege to

Valenciennes, which promptly fell. At this the Prince of Orange hastened to the relief of St. Omer, but was himself soon forced to give way ; both Cambray and St. Omer falling into possession of the French king.

Upon the news of these events, Parliament at once became aroused and urged that the king form such alliances as would assure the protection of their own possessions and the Spanish Netherlands. But the king had little intent to do aught that would offend his good friend Louis. So, whilst he answered Parliament that Flanders should be fully protected, he next invited the Prince of Orange to London and tempted him with the offer of the hand of Lady Mary.

Suchwise, then, did matters stand upon our return to England. The French king craftily encroaching ; the English king embracing the Prince and making airy speeches of no moment ; the Lady Mary smiling seductively upon him at any moment ; and the Prince himself standing like a perdu and in glum silence at it all. Whilst ever and anon, Parliament would give a great bark that would go resounding through the land. A very pretty mess, in sooth, as every one doubtless recalls.

And yet the days dwindled by without anything being done ; so that, save for a frequent visit with my sweetheart, I was in despair half the time. One evening, however, chanc-

ing to be upon the street after the play was over, I observed a gentleman in company with two ladies dash past me and turn in at Man's. And, what though he wore a vizard as did the ladies, I should have known him anywhere for "the handsome Englishman," — as Colonel Churchill was ever styled by Turenne.

Waiting a moment in uncertainty, I presently followed after him, and was fortunate in being seen by him almost as I entered. Giving a sudden start, he excused himself from his companions and stepped over to where I stood eying him.

"Of all men, my dear sergeant," he said, clasping my hand heartily. "I have been seeking you for weeks."

"I have been absent, sir," I replied, bowing, "and am but recently returned from the colonies."

"Tut, man! you've not been concerned in that rebellion?" he asked sharply.

"I have fought with the Virginians, Colonel Churchill," said I frankly; "mayhap it is now called a rebellion."

"Well, well, 'tis no matter," he assured me. "Berkeley has been recalled, sergeant; you may not have heard. He has been a month in London."

At this news I smiled with so much pleasure that the colonel could not fail to note it. Speaking sternly, he continued: "But it is

with England you are concerned. Would you accept a commission, sir, if I can effect it?"

Without a thought, I exclaimed eagerly, "Sir, to again see service with you would please me above all things."

"Then listen, sergeant," he went on rapidly. "Affairs have come to a crisis between the king and the Prince of Orange. The latter positively stated to Temple to-day, that he regretted having ever come to England. He seeks to leave in a few days; but, before going, he says that the king must say how they are henceforth to live, for he is certain it must be either as the greatest friends or the greatest enemies."

So saying, he dismissed me; telling me where to find him on the following night, when I was to call and receive his orders. I returned directly to my lodgings, but so full was my mind of this good fortune that I could scarce compose myself to sleep. I thought constantly of the morrow, when, as soon as ever I could see her, I was to carry the good news to Mistress Langdon and receive her congratulations. And then,—though between her smiles and tears, alas!—make such farewells as are ever incident to the uncertain life of a soldier. Yet this commission, I doubted not, would please her mightily, insuring such rapid rise and promotion as would soon give us a firm footing in life.

The following morning, then, I called at the residence of Sir William Duke, Mistress Bacon's

father, where the ladies were staying ; but they had gone out, it seemed, and would not return till noon. The hour was past two, therefore, when I again called and was admitted. Whence, with little hesitancy, I went on to speak of my meeting with Colonel Churchill, of the threatened breach between the kings, the by-play between the Prince and Lady Mary, and my promised commission. She heard me out ; never interrupting by so much as a look or a word. But when I had done, she said coolly, —

“And what, Master Vivian, has this royal mix-up to do with your affairs, or with mine?”

“Why, my love!” I began to urge, marveling greatly at her unwonted dulness, “it is everything, everything to —”

“To a Virginian, would you say, sir?” she asked proudly. “Nay, sir, bethink yourself of our position.”

“And so I do,” I cried in some impatience. “That is why I tell you of this new fortune. Bethink yourself, dear, I prythee ; how can we return to Virginia?”

“Chut!” she exclaimed at this protest, rising from her chair. “There is still a way, sir. Go see the king.”

“What?” I asked in amazement. “Knowing the punishment he has dealt our followers, would you have me stand openly before the king?”

“Aye, sir, that I would!” she declared

fearlessly. "Methinks that he has been deceived. Come, I shall go with you."

"Now, my lady?" I faltered, yet inflamed at her spirited courage.

"Yes, now, Master Vivian," she assured me, with a smile. "Let us have done with this hide-and-seek. Wait here, sir, whilst I order the carriage."

And I waited. For some little time it was, too, I remember, that could not have been wholly on account of delay in preparing the carriage. Yet did I not begrudge the moments when she next appeared; and whilst I stood gazing at her in new wonderment at her own loveliness and the richness of her attire, she blushed prettily, and said, "Well, Master Vivian, you see I am waiting for you."

Ah, what a tender, softened smile it brings back to me yet, when I recall that day of our going to see the king! Attired, forsooth, like two personages of royalty; for, whilst I had made no preparation for this departure, yet was I in attire to see my sweetheart, which, I hold, is fit to see a king in any day. And all this at a time when both our fortunes — equal, they were, in sooth — were at the lowest.

In the antechamber there stood only one person before us, waiting for an audience. He was walking the floor impatiently when we entered, but seeing us, he gave a great start of surprise, and, turning his back upon us, strutted

pompously across to a window, where he stood leaning out. There the breeze toyed with the white locks, blowing them in scant respect about the face, for which I might have felt, save for its hard frown, a moment's reverence or pity. But the past swept vividly over me — over us; and if Sir William Berkeley flattered himself that his back was being noticed beyond a moment's contemptuous curiosity, then such was only another instance of his inordinate conceit and self-love.

A door now being opened, a curtain was drawn aside, whilst a voice asked, "Who is waiting?"

"A lady, sire," came the reply, "accompanied by a gentleman."

"Ha! a pretty baggage, eh?" and I knew it now for the king's voice. "And who else is waiting?"

"That is all, sire, save Sir William Berke—"

"Sh!" admonished the king. "Show them before me!"

In another moment we were kneeling before King Charles. Commanding us to rise, I noticed that his eyes sparkled pleasurably whilst he gazed upon my lady, and that a kindly look rested upon his features as he repeated after her:

"A daughter of Lady Mary Berkeley? By my troth, my dear!" he added graciously, kissing her cheek, "a charming relative of one whom I oft admired."

And again he looked at her, till, as though reminded by the footsteps beginning to walk up and down again in the antechamber, he frowned in sudden petulancy.

"Tell me, my dear," he said quickly, "how can I serve you?"

"O sire," she answered steadily, "it is because of the uprising in Virginia that I am forced to appeal to you for justice. Because of this, sire, because my sympathy, and the little help that I could give, were given to the people in their distress, my inheritance has been confiscated. Of all that has late befallen Virginia, your gracious Majesty is well acquaint."

"Tut, tut! a sad affair, yet by no command of mine, I swear!" Pausing a moment, as though hearkening for the footsteps, that had now ceased, he continued, his voice rising bitterly, "Ods-fish! that old fool has hanged more men in that naked country than I have for the murder of my father."

"Your Majesty," cried the attendant, who had shown us in, "Sir William Berkeley still awaits."

"Well, sirrah, has he not waited and gone a month already? Ods-fish! let him keep whirling, like Ixion, to the tune of his own murderous fancy!"

Then, continuing to question my lady about the uprising—as much, I opine, because it pleased him to watch her eyes kindle and hear

the tale fresh from her own lips, as because of any real lack of information — and promising that her possessions should be restored, he next turned to me.

“And this gentleman,” he asked; “have his estates likewise been confiscated?”

And whilst I bowed and knelt before him, ere I could stammer out a word my lady answered, —

“No, sire, not his estates, but his rights.”

“Ho, ho! his rights?” laughed the king. “Be sure you have not stolen them, my pretty thief!”

Commanding me to rise, he continued: “I, too, once fought for my own rights, and lost them. But I’ve not forgotten.” Then calling to his secretary to make a note, he said: “See that a grant is made out to Master John Vivian, Esquire, of Middle Plantation, Virginia, for twenty thousand acres adjoining those of Mistress Langdon.”

I could scarce believe my ears, I remember. But gathering my wits quickly, I made out in halting sentences to express some measure of my gratitude. Then, following out after my lady, he dismissed us with a kindly smile, saying, “Love should be equal; you merely go forth as you came!”

Such a kindly, generous soul was the second Charles, despite his faults, which may Heaven forgive!

Passing out through the anteroom, we noticed Sir William still waiting restlessly to get speech, and by his expression we conjectured that his ears had been audient to all that had passed. Yet once again we saw him, and that chanced in this wise. Being too happy to ride, we dismissed the carriage and went on a-foot. Coming shortly to a grand house in Piccadilly, built in the Italian style, we saw a carriage draw up at the curb, and Sir William Berkeley alight. Walking with steps that tottered, and seeming to have greatly aged since we had seen him first, scarce an hour ago, he crossed the walk in front of us and went on up the stone staircase and into the house. That was the last we saw of him, or that the world saw either; for two days later it was rumoured that Sir William Berkeley had died of a broken heart.

The which, methinks, was a very kindly and Christianly assumption on the part of that old jade, Dame Rumour.

"This house," said my lady in passing, "belongs to my Uncle John, Baron Berkeley. Is it not beautiful?"

"Yes, my love," I admitted, "albeit not so beautiful as forty thousand broad acres in Virginia." And as we passed on into the shadow of the wall, I kissed her in pure gleefulness of spirit.

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Some fifteen years have passed swiftly, joyously by since these events happened whose chronicling I am now closing. During which time Virginia has greatly changed for the better, nor can any one say that these struggles were of no avail. In sooth, methinks God has an appointed way for us, and that, though men like our worst governor who condemn everything savouring of equality may again appear, and disappear, yet shall we not for long continue to follow after the kings or wars or other joyless superstitions of the Old World, but must be ever marching onwards, upwards, towards that which is common to the many and the All, not that which is exclusive to the selfish few.

Laying aside my quill whilst the day is waning, I swing wide open the casement to my left. And this is Williamsburg, once Middle Plantation! Looking down the noble avenue, my eyes rest for a moment on the beautiful college buildings designed by Sir Christopher Wren, then pass on a mile away to where the sun sets on the capitol, flanked by the palace of the governor. Thus convenient to hand, have I been proud to serve my shire as a worshipful burgess for several years. Nor do I aspire to any nobler or higher office if such there be.

"Evelyn, my lad!" I cry out as a bright-faced boy hurries past my window, on some mischief bent, I trow.

"Yes, sir?" He stops and salutes me.

"Where is your sister, lad, and your mother?"

"There they stand, father," he answers, pointing to a bed of deep-red dahlias that they are training to hold up their heads.

"Then wait a moment, my lad," say I. Returning to my desk, I seek out a token that is never far away. Giving this to Master Evelyn, I tell him to go hand it to his mother, and say that I picked it up beside the path.

Running swiftly at my command, I watch him hand it her and cry out the words.

"What do you say?" she asks. And again I hear him repeat the words.

"This is very strange, Master Evelyn," she says. But, looking up perplexedly, she all at once catches a glimpse of me as I stand leaning out of the window laughing at her.

"You are wondrously honest, Master Vivian," she cries, shaking her head at me in arch command, "to send it back to me after all these days."

And again I am thrilled with the dream of fifteen years ago, and the memory of some of the greatest rebels that were ever in all Virginia.

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